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## PREFACE

The present issue is made up exclusively of articles written in the Institute alongside the pursuit of larger bodies of research. Dr. Pollock's article and that of Dr. Kirchheimer originated from lectures aiming at a fundamental economic and social critique of National Socialism, delivered at Columbia University as a part of a series by the Institute. Dr. Marcuse's article expands his paper for the same occasion into a more comprehensive discussion of the problem of the individual in present day society. The article on Reason and the one on Veblen represent the fruit of a joint effort of their authors. It became clear to us that thorough study and earnest analysis of Veblen, America's great sociological critic of culture, would help us better to understand the catastrophic change in human nature, outlines of which the article on Reason attempts to sketch.

For the duration of the war, the "Studies" will be published as a yearbook instead of three times per annum.

MAX HORKHEIMER.

Los Angeles, California

March 1942.



## The End of Reason

By Max Horkheimer

The fundamental concepts of civilization are in a process of rapid decay. The rising generation no longer feels any confidence in them, and Fascism has strengthened their suspicions. The question of how far these concepts are at all valid clamors more than ever for answer. The decisive concept among them was that of reason, and philosophy knew of no higher principle. It was supposed to order the relationships among men and to justify all the performances demanded of them. The church fathers and the guiding spirits of the Enlightenment agreed in their praise of reason. Voltaire called it "God's incomprehensible gift to mankind" and "the source of every society, institution, and order."<sup>1</sup> Origen said we should not compare men, even bad men, to animals, in order that we might not dishonor reason.<sup>2</sup> To the ancient world reason was the masterful principle of creation,<sup>3</sup> to Kant, its triumph was the hidden yet certain trend of world history notwithstanding all retrogression, interludes of darkness, deviations.<sup>4</sup> It is from this ideal of reason that the ideas of freedom, justice, and truth derived their justification. They were held to be innate to it, intuited or necessarily conceived by it. The era of reason is the title of honor claimed by the enlightened world.

The philosophy this world produced is essentially rationalistic, but time and again in following out its own principles it turns against itself and takes the form of skepticism. The dogmatic or the skeptical nuance, depending on which was given the emphasis, in each case determined the relation of philosophy to social forces, and in the shifting fortunes of the ensuing struggle the changing significance of rationality itself became manifest. The concept of reason from the very beginning included the concept of critique. Rationalism itself had established the criteria of rigidity, clarity and distinctness as the criteria of rational cognition. Skeptical and empiri-

<sup>1</sup>*Dialogue d'Ephémère, Oeuvres complètes*, Paris 1880, Garnier, Vol. 30, p. 488.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *Origen against Celsus*, Book 4, ch. 25 (The Antinice Fathers, ed. Robert and Donaldson, New York 1890, Vol. IV, p. 507).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, I 1260a 18.

<sup>4</sup>Kant, *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, Ninth Proposition.



cal doctrines opposed rationalism with these selfsame standards. The left wing Socratic opposition branded Plato's academy a breeding place of superstition, until the latter moved toward skepticism. Siger of Brabant and Roger Bacon fought the scholastic rationalism of Thomas Aquinas until his own order, after Duns Scotus, gave way to more empirical tendencies. Progressive and reactionary thinkers alike, the materialistic physicians and Gassendi, the Jesuit, protested against Descartes' doctrine of the spiritual nature of man. Kant was told even in Germany that his philosophy boasted without justification of its victory over Hume's skepticism.<sup>1</sup>

Skepticism purged the idea of reason of so much of its content that today scarcely anything is left of it. Reason, in destroying conceptual fetishes, ultimately destroyed itself. Formerly it was the herald of eternal ideas, which were only dimly shadowed in the material world. Later, it was supposed to recognize itself in the order of natural things and to discover the immutable forms of reality in which eternal reason was expressed. Throughout the millennia philosophers believed that they possessed such knowledge. Now they have learned better. None of the categories of rationalism has survived. Modern science looks upon such of them as Mind, Will, Final Cause, Transcendental Creation, Innate Ideas, *res extensa* and *res cogitans* as spooks, despising them even more than Galileo did the cobwebs of scholasticism. Reason itself appears as a ghost that has emerged from linguistic usage. According to most recent logics, the grammar of every day language is still adapted to an animistic pattern of thought, continuously hypostatizing states and actions as nominatives, so that within this language "life calls," "duty demands," and "the nothing threatens." By this method reason comes to "make discoveries" and to "exist as one and the same in all men." The name of such reason is held to be a meaningless symbol, an allegorical figure without a function, and all ideas that transcend the given reality are forced to share its disgrace. Since this opinion has pervaded every stratum of our society it does not suffice to propagate freedom, the dignity of man, or even truth. Any attempts along this line only raise the suspicion that the true reasons behind them are either held back or are entirely lacking.

Nevertheless, reason has not been cancelled altogether from the vocabulary of those who are up to date, but has only been reduced

<sup>1</sup>Gottlob Ernst Schulze, *Aenesidemus oder über die Fundamente der von dem Herrn Professor Reinhold in Jena gelieferten Elementarphilosophie. Nebst einer Verteidigung des Skeptizismus gegen die Anmassung der Vernunftkritik*. 1792. In Neudrucke der Kantgesellschaft, Berlin 1911, p. 135.

to its pragmatic significance much more radically than ever before. Gone are the teachings of rationalistic metaphysics, but the patterns of rationalistic behavior have remained. Locke once wrote, "the word reason in the English language has different significations; sometimes it is taken for true and clear principles; sometimes for clear and fair deductions from those principles; and sometimes for the cause, and particularly the final cause."<sup>1</sup> He appended four degrees of reason: discovering truths, regularly and methodically ordering them, perceiving their connections, and drawing the right conclusion. Apart from the final cause, these functions today still are held to be rational. Reason in this sense is as indispensable in the modern technique of war as it has always been in the conduct of business. Its features can be summarized as the optimum adaptation of means to ends, thinking as an energy-conserving operation. It is a pragmatic instrument oriented to expediency, cold and sober. The belief in cleverness rests on motives much more cogent than metaphysical propositions. When even the dictators of today appeal to reason they mean that they possess the most tanks. They were rational enough to build them; others should be rational enough to yield to them. Within the range of Fascism, to defy such reason is the cardinal crime.

As close as the bond between reason and efficiency is here revealed to be, in reality so has it always been. The causes of this interconnection lie within the basic structure of society itself. The human being can fulfill his natural wants only through social channels. Use is a social category, and reason follows it up in all phases of competitive society; through reason the individual asserts or adapts himself and gets along in society. It induces the individual to subordinate himself to society whenever he is not powerful enough to pattern society upon his own interests. Among primitives the individual's place in society was determined by instinct, in modern society it is supposed to be determined by reason, that is to say, by the individual's consciousness of where his advantage lies. Even Greek idealism was to a large extent pragmatic in this sense and identified the good and the advantageous, the beautiful and the useful,<sup>2</sup> putting the welfare of the whole before the welfare of its members. The individual was nothing apart from that whole. The entire humanistic tradition of philosophy tried to bring the two together. Reason, in humanism, aimed at the proper balance between what is good for the individual and what is good for the totality.

<sup>1</sup>*Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book IV, ch. xvii, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. E. Zeller, *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, transl. by Reichel, London 1868, p. 125.



The *Polis* was guided by the ideal of harmony between the individual interest and the common good. The medieval towns and the political theorists of the rising national state renewed this ideal. Harmony was supposed to come about through the sphere of law. Whoever desires to live among men has to obey their laws—this is what the secular morality of Western civilization comes down to. Montaigne says in discussing Socrates that as long as we seek refuge in religion we have one guide only, that each must obey the laws of his country.<sup>1</sup> Rationality in the form of such obedience swallows up everything, even the freedom to think. This is the one point on which De Maistre agrees with the French revolution. "Government is a veritable religion: it has its dogmas, its mysteries, its ministers . . . the primary need of man is that his growing reason . . . be lost in the national reason so that it may change his individual existence into another, common, existence, just as a river that flows into the ocean always exists in the mass of water though without a name and without a distinct reality. What is *patriotism*? It is that national reason of which I speak; it is the *abnegation* of the individual."<sup>2</sup> This brand of reason also prevailed in the cults of the French revolution. Mathiez, the apologist for Robespierre, says that the religion of reason had as much intolerance in it as did the old religion. ". . . It admits of no contradiction, it requires oaths, it is made obligatory by prison, exile or the scaffold, and like religion proper it is concretized in sacred signs, in definite and exclusive symbols which are surrounded by a suspicious piety."<sup>3</sup>

The basic unity of the period obliterates differences of opinion. The enthusiasm of the counter-revolution and of the popular leaders not only joined in a common faith in the executioner but also in the conviction that reason may at any time justify renouncing thought, particularly of the poor. De Maistre, a belated absolutist, preaches forswearing reason for reason's sake. The others set up the *Comité du Salut Publique*.

The individual has to do violence to himself and learn that the life of the whole is the necessary precondition of his own. Reason has to master rebellious feelings and instincts, the inhibition of which is supposed to make human cooperation possible. Inhibitions originally imposed from without have to become part and parcel of the individual's own consciousness,—this principle already prevailed

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Les Essais*, edited Villey, Paris 1930, Vol. II, ch. xii, p. 491 ff.

<sup>2</sup>De Maistre, *Etude sur la Souveraineté*, *Oeuvres complètes*, Lyon 1891, Tome I, pp. 367-77.

<sup>3</sup>A. Mathiez, *Contributions à l'Histoire religieuse de la Revolution Française*, Paris 1907, p. 32.

in the ancient world. What is called progress lay in the social expansion of it. In the Christian era everyone was to bear the cross voluntarily. For those at the base of the social pyramid, however, the harmony between the universal and the particular interest was merely a postulate. They had no share in that common interest which they were asked to make their own. It was never quite rational to them to renounce their instincts, and as a result they never were quite reached by civilization, but were always made sociable by force. This is what dictatorship always has been based upon. The *beati possidentes*, however, rightly regarded the political and spiritual powers as agencies of their own. They fulfilled for themselves the idea of a rational civilization in so far as their sociability was derived from their knowledge of their individual interests. The latter remain the rational criteria for the harmony between the universal and the particular interest.

The difficulties of rationalistic philosophy originate from the fact that the universality of reason cannot be anything else than the accord among the interests of all individuals alike, whereas in reality society has been split up into groups with conflicting interests. Owing to this contradiction the appeal to the universality of reason assumes the features of the spurious and the illusory. Reason's claim to be absolute presupposes that a true community exists among men. By denying the reality of universal concepts and pointing to existing reality instead, the empiricists are right as against the rationalists. On the other hand, the rationalists are right as against the empiricists in that, through what is implied in their concept of reason, they uphold the potential solidarity of men as an ideal against the actual state of affairs in which solidarity is asserted with violence and catastrophe. At the close of the liberal era, however, thinking in terms of mere existence, of sober self-preservation, has spread over the whole of society. All men have become empiricists.

The definition of reason in terms of individual self-preservation apparently contradicts Locke's prototypical definition, according to which reason designates the direction of intellectual activity regardless of its external goal. But Locke's definition still holds true. It does not liberate reason from the atomic self-interest of the individual. It rather defines procedures which more readily suit whatever goal self-interest may require. The increasingly formalistic universality of reason, far from signifying an increasing consciousness of universal solidarity, expresses the skeptical separation of thought from its object. Thought becomes what it was designated to



be during the Aristotelian beginnings of empirical science, namely, an "organon." As a consequence of Locke and Kant, thought no longer conceives the objects as they really are, but contents itself with ordering and classifying supposedly pure data. The triumph of nominalism goes hand in hand with the triumph of formalism. In limiting itself to seeing objects as a strange multiplicity, as a chaos, reason becomes a kind of adding machine that manipulates analytical judgments. The objects could be regarded as an unqualified mass in philosophy because economic reality had levelled them, rendering all things equivalent to money as the common denominator. In the face of such levelling the proper being of the object is no longer taken into account. Cognition thus becomes that which registers the objects and proceeds to interpret the quantified expressions of them. The less human beings think of reality in qualitative terms, the more susceptible reality becomes to manipulation. Its objects are neither understood nor respected.

The sheer multiplicity of objects has its counterpart in the so-called pluralism of ends, according to which a gulf exists between the scientific judgments and the realm of values. As a result the value judgment has nothing to do with reason and science. It is regarded as a matter of subjective preference whether one decides for liberty or obedience, democracy or Fascism, enlightenment or authority, mass culture or truth. Freedom of choice, however, has always been the privilege of the small groups which enjoyed a life of abundance. For them it was possible to select among the so-called cultural goods, always provided that these goods were in harmony with their interests of dominion. This was the only pluralism of values that materialized. Wherever the values in question affected the base of European society, they were predetermined. The will to self-preservation of the upper strata of society, though it was rent asunder by competition, unequivocally defined the course of action against slaves, serfs, and masses. The perpetuation of privileges was the only rational criterion which determined whether one should fight against or collude with other interests and groups, maintain constitutional government or take the step to authoritarianism. The great historic decisions differed from one another in being far-sighted or near-sighted, not in the nature of their ends.

Self-preservation was also at the root of the variety of attributes characterizing individuality. Poise, rank, propriety, gallantry, still are what pragmatism mistakes them to be, habitual forms of the individual's adjustment to the social situation. In the distant past all who behaved at variance with these norms were threatened with loss

of class standing. Today, the norms are remnants of those past forms of society in which the individual was lost without them. They still retain the mark of these times, but with the loss of their purpose they have lost their vigor. As the ornaments on useful objects point to past techniques of production, the imperfection of which they retain as adornments, so the now impotent human standards of behavior inherited from feudal ages still bear the hallmark of the violence which the lords of the past had to exercise against themselves for the sake of their own adjustment. In the present state of society these human traits assume the reconciliatory character of the purposeless, but they still adapt themselves very well to prevailing ends. The aristocrat, who left the domestic market to the business man, attempted instead to conquer the foreign market for him. Aristocrats held their monopoly as war lords for the business man until the new technology of war brought about the inevitable alteration. They held it even at a time when bourgeois norms, attitudes, and reactions, such as thrift and integrity, already began to share the fate of aristocratic standards of behavior. The latter owed their glory chiefly to the efforts of the middle class to strengthen its position by glorifying its predecessors. This solidarity with past rulers is derived from a common attitude to the rest of society. Power is made to appear as eternal. One's own prestige is enhanced if functionaries of the middle class like Napoleon Bonaparte find their place in the pantheon of history side by side with other great lords and executioners regardless of whether they were friends or enemies. At home, the well-to-do imitate what they call style; in their offices they abide by the standards of business morality, since their class cannot exist without a discipline of its own; as against internal and external competitors and as against the masses, however, they practice that which actually links them to the historical tradition, namely, integral self-preservation.

This self-preservation may even call for the death of the individual which is to be preserved. Sacrifice can be rational when it becomes necessary to defend the state's power which is alone capable of guaranteeing the existence of those whose sacrifice it demands. The idea of reason, even in its nominalistic and purified form, has always justified sacrifice. During the heroic era the individual destroyed his life for the interests and symbols of the collectivity that guaranteed it. Property was the institution that conveyed to the individual the idea that something of his existence might remain after death. At the origin of organized society, property endured while generations passed away. The monadic individual survived



by bequeathing it. Through the legacy, the individual perpetuated himself even after his death, but he did not contradict the principle of self-preservation if he sacrificed his life to the state whose laws guaranteed this legacy. Sacrifice thus took its place as a rational institution.

The rationality of sacrifice and self-renunciation, however, was differentiated according to social status: it decreased with decreasing wealth and opportunity, and eventually became compulsory. As against the poor it has always been rational to supplement reason with earthly and heavenly justice. Voltaire admits that reason might triumph for decent people, "but the *canaille* is not made for it."<sup>1</sup> "We have never intended to enlighten shoemakers and servants,—this is up to apostles,"<sup>2</sup> he says.

For the masses the road from one's own interest to that of preserving society was devious and long. In their case one could not rely upon rational and self-imposed renunciation of instincts or drives. If a Greek slave or a woman had spoken and acted like Socrates she would have been a fool, not a sage. Socrates, by his death, elevated loyalty to the laws of the state above all else. Within the era of conscience that he initiated rationality pertained to those who were socially more or less independent.

The masses turned to religion, but their doing so did not affect the basic rationality of self-preservation. Rationalism has no right to complain about Luther. The latter called reason a beast and a whore only because at his time reason could not of itself cause the individual to suppress his appetites. The religious Reformation trained men to subordinate their lives to more remote ends. Instead of surrendering to the moment they were taught to learn objective reasoning, consistency, and pragmatic behavior. Man was thus not only strengthened in his resistance to fate but was also enabled to free himself now and then from the overpowering mechanism of self-preservation and expediency. Such contemplative pauses, however, could not prevent the interest of the prevailing order from spreading its roots in the hearts of men. Protestantism promoted the spread of that cold rationality which is so characteristic of the modern individual. It was iconoclastic and did away with the false worship of things, but by allying itself with the rising economic system it made men dependent upon the world of things even to a higher degree than

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<sup>1</sup>Letter to D'Alembert, Feb. 4, 1757, *op. cit.*, Vol. 39, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup>Letter to D'Alembert, Sept. 2, 1768, *op. cit.*, Vol. 46, p. 112.

before. Where formerly they worked for the sake of salvation, they were now induced to work for work's sake, profit for profit's sake, power for power's sake. The whole world was transformed into a mere "material." If the new spirit served as an anodyne for the people it was at least one that eased the surgery, foreordained by rationalism, which the industrial system worked on their bodies and minds. There was no other path from the medieval workshop to the assembly line than through the inversion of external compulsion into the compulsion of conscience. It produced the machine-like assiduity and pliable allegiance required by the new rationality. Calvin's theocratic irrationalism eventually revealed itself as the cunning of technocratic reason which had to shape its human material. Misery and the poor laws did not suffice to drive men into the workshops of the early capitalistic era. The new spirit helped to supplement the external pressures with a concern for wife and child to which the moral autonomy of the introverted subject in reality was tantamount. Today, at the end of this process which originated in Renaissance and Reformation, the rational form of self-preservation boils down to an obstinate compliance as such which has, however, become indifferent to any political or religious content. In Fascism, the autonomy of the individual has developed into heteronomy.

The totalitarian order marks the leap from the indirect to direct forms of domination, while still maintaining a system of private enterprise. The National Socialists do not stand outside the pattern of economic trends. The gangster theory of National Socialism must be taken even more seriously than it is by those who believe that a normal state of affairs could be restored as soon as the fester has been removed. Government in Germany was not usurped by gangsters who forced an entry from without; rather, social domination led to gangster rule by virtue of its own economic principle. During the era of free industrial economy when none of the many decentralized enterprises was so powerful that it did not need to compact with the others, self-preservation was restricted by standards of *humanitas*. Monopolism has again abolished these restrictions and led social domination back to its true nature which had continued to operate only where the humane form of domination had left some loopholes to inhumanity, in the petty rackets and rings of the big cities. They knew of no other law than the discipline they inevitably had to have in order to plunder their clients. Procurers, condottieri, manorial lords and guilds have always protected and at the same time exploited their clients. Protection is the archetype of domination. After the interlude of liberalism economic tendencies in Europe progressed toward a new and total protectionism. Only the great com-



bines survived competition. They were strong enough to destroy the separation of powers and the network of guarantees and rights. The monopolies and their government constituted an impenetrable jungle for the masses. The magnitude and diversity of the tasks of the prevailing cliques, the all-embracing character of which still distinguishes them from racketeering, turns into comprehensive planning on the one hand and on the other into an attack on mankind as such. This is the inevitable result of the economic development itself. The same sociological mechanisms apply to the monopoly and to the city racket. The latter had previously shared the spoils with other rackets of the same branch, but the growth of communication and the progressing centralization of the police made it impossible to continue with small bribes and the procurement of new henchmen and guns. The racket was forced to mechanize its business and to undertake the costly task of affiliating it to large political organizations. Such investments are profitable only if the spoils do not have to be divided. In the racket, cartelization asserts itself. The rackets in the cities and in the entire country are driven to unification unless the police succeed in eradicating them in time. A study of such border phenomena as racketeering may offer useful parallels for understanding certain developmental tendencies in modern society. As soon as the concentrated power of large property has reached a certain point, the struggle continues on a broader scale and develops, under the pressure of giant investments necessitated by the progress of technology, into the struggle for world conquest interrupted only by periods of precarious compromise. From this point on, the differences of goals and ideals within the power hierarchy recede before the differences in the degree of docility. The *élites* must see to it, even against their own will, that in the social order everything is rigidly coordinated. Under totalitarian conditions of society, reliability decides upon the allocation of all positions of trust, whether a manager of a provincial factory is to be appointed or the head of a puppet government. Side by side with efficiency, human qualities of a kind again win respect, particularly a resolution to go along with the powerful at any cost. For the trustees are mere delegates. He who is worthy of his task is not to show any traces of that which the self-criticism of reason has destroyed. He must embody the self-preservation of a whole that has become identical with the liquidation of humanity. At the beginning of the history of modern rackets stand the Inquisitioners, at its end the Fascist leaders. Their henchmen, living their lives face to face with catastrophe, have to react correctly until they fall victim to the rational principle that none may abide too long.

Present day contempt of reason does not extend to purposive behavior. The term mind, insofar as it designates an intellectual faculty or an objective principle, appears as a meaningless word unless it refers to a coordination of ends and means. The destruction of rationalistic dogmatism through the self-criticism of reason, carried out by the ever renewed nominalistic tendencies in philosophy, has now been ratified by historical reality. The substance of individuality itself, to which the idea of autonomy was bound, did not survive the process of industrialization. Reason has degenerated because it was the ideological projection of a false universality which now shows the autonomy of the subject to have been an illusion. The collapse of reason and the collapse of individuality are one and the same. "The ego is unsavable,"<sup>1</sup> and self-preservation has lost its "self." For whom can an action still be useful if the biological individual is no longer conscious of itself as an identical unit? Throughout its various stages of life the body possesses only a questionable identity. The unity of individual life has been a social rather than natural one. When the social mechanisms which made for this unity are weakened as they are today, the individual's concern for his self-preservation changes its meaning. What previously served to promote man's development, the joy in knowledge, living through memory and foresight, pleasure in oneself and others, narcissism as well as love, are losing their content. Neither conscience nor egoism is left. The moral law has become inadequate for those who are supposed to obey it, and the authority which it previously invoked has disappeared. Morality had to disappear, since it did not conform with its own principle. It pretended to be independent of empirical individuals, unconditionally universal. But its universal form perpetuated antagonisms among individuals and a tyranny over men and nature. It is vain to hope that in better times men will return to morality. Yet even in Fascism it has left its traces within men, and these at least have been freed of spurious positivity. Morality has survived insofar as men are conscious that the reality to which they yield is not the right one. Nietzsche proclaimed the death of morality; modern psychology has devoted itself to exploring it. Psychoanalysis as the adjustment form of modern skepticism triumphed over moral law through its discovery and unmasking of the father in the super-ego. This psychology, however, was the "owl of Minerva" which took its flight when the shades of dark were already gathering over the whole sphere of private life. The father may still possess a super-ego, but the child has long unmasked it, together

<sup>1</sup>Ernst Mach, *Contributions to the Analysis of the Sensations*, transl. by C. M. Williams, Chicago 1897, p. 20.

with the ego and the character. Today the child imitates only performances and achievements; he accepts not ideas, but matters of fact.

With the disappearance of independent economic subjects, the subject as such disappears. It is no longer a synthetic unit; it has become senseless for it to preserve itself for some distant future or to plan for its heirs. In the present period the individual has opportunities only on short term. Once secure property has vanished as the goal of acquisition, the intrinsic connection between the experiences of the individual disappears. Concern for property under orderly competition and the rule of law has always been constitutive of the ego. Slaves and paupers had no individuality. The "premise of all my acting in the sensuous world, can only be as part of that sensuous world, if I live amongst other free beings. This determined part of the world . . . is called . . . my *property*."<sup>1</sup> The concept of the ego "must also will a future state to exist, which shall have resulted from the present state, in consequence of the rule which he followed when he resolved upon his act of causality."<sup>2</sup> Property and the orderly functioning of property relations were the referents of the notion of one's own past and future. Today the individual ego has been absorbed by the pseudo-ego of totalitarian planning. Even those who hatch the totalitarian plan, despite and because of the huge mass and capital over which they dispose, have as little autonomy as those they control. The latter are organized in all sorts of groups, and in these the individual is but an element possessing no importance in himself. If he wants to preserve himself he must work as part of a team, ready and skilled in everything, whether in industry, agriculture or sport. In every camp he must defend his physical existence, his working, eating and sleeping place, must give and take cuffs and blows and submit to the toughest discipline. The responsibility of long term planning for himself and his family has given way to the ability to adjust himself to mechanical tasks of the moment. The individual constricts himself. Without dream or history, he is always watchful and ready, always aiming at some immediate practical goal. His life falls into a sequence of data which fit in advance the questionnaires he has to answer. He takes the spoken word only as a medium of information, orientation, and command. The semantic dissolution of language into a system of signs, as undertaken by modern logistics, transcends the realm of logic. It draws its conclusions from a state of affairs which surrenders language to

<sup>1</sup>I. G. Fichte, *The Science of Ethics*, transl. by A. E. Kroeger, New York 1897, p. 308.

<sup>2</sup>I. G. Fichte, *The Science of Rights*, transl. by A. E. Kroeger, London 1889, p. 167.



the rule of monopoly. To be accepted, men must sound like the vocal chords of the radio, film, and magazine. For in point of fact no one seems to make his living by himself, and everyone is suspect in mass society. Everyone needs a permanent alibi. The individual no longer has any future to care for, he has only to be ready to adapt himself, to follow orders, to pull levers, to perform ever different things which are ever the same. The social unit is no longer the family but the atomic individual, and the struggle for life consists in his resolving not to be annihilated at any moment in the world of apparatuses, engines, and handles.

Bodily strength is not the chief point, but it is important enough. To a large extent, it is not a natural quality. It is a product of the social division of labor, one that is necessary for production and supplied by whole strata of society to whom no other reason for existence was left except to supply it. Those among the dominated strata who excel in brute force reflect the injustice that the ox which treads out the corn has always been muzzled. Culture was the attempt to tame this element of brute force immanent in the principle of bodily strength. Such taming, however, concealed the fact that physical exertion remained the kernel of work. The counterpart of this concealment was the glorification of bodily strength in ideology, expressed in encomia to every brand of greatness,—intellectual giants as well as muscle men at county fairs, in Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, in the monster stadium. Today the ideological veil has been lifted and the principle of bodily strength has been openly propagated in the form of strongarm methods and purges.

Contemporary individuals, however, need presence of mind even more than muscles; the ready response is what counts, affinity to every kind of machine, technical, athletic, political. Previously, men were mere appendages to the machine, today they are appendages as such. Reflective thought and theory lose their meaning in the struggle for self-preservation. Fifty years ago psychological experience, skillful argumentation, foresight in business were still instruments of progress in society. Prior to the mechanization of the office, even the accountant had to use not only his dexterity but also his intellect. With the total incorporation of the enterprise into the realm of monopoly, rational argumentation loses its force. It now bears the hallmarks of that sales talk in the service of which it was formerly used, and which the victorious monopoly can dispense with. The distrust which peasants and children display for glib persons has always preserved the notion of that injustice which made language the servant of gain. The muteness of men today is largely to

be blamed on language which once was only too eloquent against them.

Today man needs factual knowledge, the automaton ability to react correctly, but he does not need that quiet consideration of diverse possibilities which presupposes the freedom and leisure of choice. The liberty which the market offered to the producers, consumers, and their multifold intermediaries, although it may have been abstract and deceptive, had at least permitted a certain range of deliberation. In the monopolistic apparatus none possesses that time and range. Each has to respond quickly, to innervate promptly. Under totalitarian planning men are dominated by the means of production even more than they were under the market system. Lack of efficiency is a capital offense. The brief period of spare time which still remains to men in their daily lives is now protected against waste. The danger that it will degenerate into otiosity, a state always despised so much by industry, is warded off. Since Descartes, philosophy was one great attempt to place itself as science in the service of the prevailing mode of production, an attempt opposed only by very few thinkers. With the abolition of *otium* and of the ego no aloof thinking is left. The social atoms, though they may still yearn for liberation, have lost the speculative sense, in the good and bad connotation of that term. The outlook is dark for philosophy. Without *otium* philosophical thought is impossible, cannot be conceived or understood. In such a state of affairs the argumentative procedure of traditional philosophy appears as helpless and idle talk. At the last minute phenomenology attempted, paradoxically enough, to elaborate a mode of thinking without disputation, but positivism, in which this philosophy originated, became its heir. It removed thought from philosophy and reduced the latter to the technique of organizing, by reproduction and abridgment, the matters of fact given in the world of sense. In positivism reason sustains itself through self-liquidation.

With the decline of the ego and its reflective reason, human relationships tend to a point wherein the rule of economy over all personal relationships, the universal control of commodities over the totality of life, turns into a new and naked form of command and obedience. No longer buttressed by small scale property, the school and the home are losing their educational function of preparing men for life in society. Living and being prepared have become one and the same thing, just as with the military profession. In school the hierarchy of sport and gymnastics triumphs over the classroom hierarchy which has never been accepted whole-heartedly by children anyhow.



The disputed authority of the teacher decreases in favor of an unconditional and anonymous, but ever-present, authority whose demands now have preference. This is the authority of the omnipotent standards of mass society. The qualities which the child needs in this society are imposed upon him by the collectivity of the school class, and the latter is but a segment of the strictly organized society itself. The teacher has the choice of winning the pupil's favor, even by harshness if need be, or of being ridiculed. Compared with the skills which are required of the individual today, the curriculum possesses only a subordinate value. Children learn quickly to know the automobile and radio inside out. They are born with this knowledge, which is not essentially different from knowledge of the most complicated machine, and they can do without science. School physics is obsolete in a twofold sense: it is equally remote from the mathematical consequences of relativity and quantum theory (which have long since passed beyond the limits of representation) and from the practical dexterity which alone matters to the pupil. The teacher cannot mediate between the realm of theory and practice, since the transition from practical observation to theory is no longer recognizable. The highest theory is still a mode of blind technique, as much as repair work is. Both are accomplished by sheer skill, the one in the study, the other in the shop. The difficulties which the theoretical physicist experiences when asked to cross from his mathematical syntheses of different conceptual realms to the world of objects is about the same as the inability of the most skillful mechanic to cross from manipulation of the motor to the principles of its working. Physical knowledge is split into knowledge of handling and knowledge of fields; and this cleavage resulting from the division of labor affects the student's relation to knowledge as such. The exploration of meanings is replaced by an acquaintance with functions. The animistic carryovers of theory are weeded out and this triumph at the same time implies a *sacrificium intellectus*. Technical practice can get along without physics, just as the film star can get along without an apprenticeship and the Fascist statesman without learning. Education is no longer a process taking place between individuals, as it was when the father prepared his son to take over his property, and the teacher supported him. Present day education is directly carried out by society itself and takes place behind the back of the family.

Childhood becomes a historical phenomenon. Christianity inaugurated the idea of childhood in its glorification of the weak, and the bourgeois family sometimes made that idea a reality. During the Christian era up to the Enlightenment, however, reason operated

on the child as an external compulsion to self-preservation which crushed everything that could not defend itself. The sculpture and painting of the middle ages, which did not differentiate between physically and socially inferior beings, revealed the secret of the *ordo* and hierarchy, namely, who could with impunity beat whom. Children who in the Christian world suffered the tortures of Hell were, in the Enlightenment world, rewarded with the Christian heaven. Happiness shall be theirs because they have been chosen as the symbols of innocence. In his adoration of his children the enlightened business man of the 19th century could mourn his lost religion without becoming superstitious. Children symbolized the Golden Age as well as the promising future. The rationalistic society gave children legends and fairy tales so that they might mirror hope back to their disillusioned elders. The latter created the idyll of childhood in order to escape between the horns of sober knowledge and ideology, from a dilemma which, in the face of ever threatening social upheavals, they could not resolve. The child ideal reflected the truth within the lie that kept the underlying population in line, the utopia of eternal happiness. This utopia was the place of last resort for the religious ideals of those times in which the bourgeois themselves were still among the underlying.

They can do without this utopia today. In monopolistic society childhood and adolescence have become mere biological processes. Puberty is no longer a human crisis, for the child is grown up as soon as he can walk, and the grown-up in principle always remains the same. Development has ceased to exist. During the heyday of the family the father represented the authority of society to the child, and puberty was the inevitable conflict between these two. Today, however, the child stands face to face with society at once, and the conflict is decided even before it arises. The world is so possessed by the power of what is and the efforts of adjustment to it, that the adolescent's rebellion, which once fought the father because his practices contradicted his own ideology, can no longer crop up. The process which hardens men by breaking down their individuality—a process consciously and planfully undertaken in the various camps of Fascism—takes place tacitly and mechanically in them everywhere under mass culture, and at such an early age that when children come to consciousness everything is settled. Since Freud, the relation between father and son has been reversed. Now, the rapidly changing society which passes its judgment upon the old is represented not by the father but by the child. The child, not the father, stands for reality. The awe which the Hitler youth enjoys from his parents is but the pointed political expression of a



universal state of affairs. This new relationship affects even the very first years of life during which father image and super-ego are supposed to arise. Psychologically, the father is represented not by another individual but replaced by the world of things and by the crowd to which the boy is tied.

The elimination of the conflict between individual and society also affects love. With the passing of the authority of the father the danger of catastrophic conflicts with the family fades away. Yet they had kindled abandon. Today sex seems to be emancipated and still oppression goes on. Social regimentation of the relations between the sexes had gone far before racial eugenics consummated this process; it was expressed by the standardized normalcy in all spheres of mass culture. Eugenics has its roots in the Enlightenment. Science objectified sex until it could be manipulated. In its inhuman soberness Kant's definition of marriage as a contract for the mutual possession of the sexual organs indicts inhuman sexual privileges according to the standards of natural law. This definition had, in the 19th century, made its way into the practice of men. In contemporary mass society, the sexes are levelled in that both regard their sex as a thing over which they dispose without illusion. Girls strive to come off as well as they can in the competition with other girls, and, in their eyes, flirtation enhances prestige rather than future pleasure. With Kant, they take sex as a property possessing an exchange value. Wedekind once demanded freedom of prostitution because he thought that women could catch up with male society only through conscious use of their sole monopoly. The modern girl, however, wins her freedom by exploiting the patriarchal taboo which humiliates her by placing her on a pedestal. Sex loses its power over men. It is turned on and off according to the requirements of the situation. Men no longer lose themselves in it, they are neither moved nor blinded by love. Under National Socialism extra-marital intercourse is among activities encouraged by the state as socially useful forms of labor. Love is organized by the state. During good times, children are trained as future heirs; during bad times, as prospective breadwinners for their parents; under Fascism they are produced under the auspices of the state and delivered to it as a kind of tax, if one can still speak of taxes in a society wherein one group of magnates exploits all the rest of the population. Taxes have an obvious significance under Fascism. With property owners they contribute to accelerating the process of centralization and to beating down weaker competitors. With the masses their money form becomes transparent and shows forth as toil in the service of power. Part of this toil is the labor of childbirth. Under

National Socialism the girl's refusal of herself to men in uniform is deemed to be as unbecoming as ready surrender formerly was. In Germany the image of the Virgin Mary had never quite replaced the archaic cult of the woman. Under the surface of Christian civilization memories of matriarchal conditions were never quite extinguished. These vestiges continued to assert themselves in the common antipathy to the old spinster as well as in the German *Lied's* devotion to the deserted mistress, long before National Socialists ostracized prudes and celebrated illegitimate mothers. But the ascetic beatitude of the Christian virgin by far surpassed the pleasure authorized by the National Socialist regime and fed with memories of the buried past. The National Socialist regime rationalizes the mythical past which it pretends to conserve, calling it by name and mobilizing it on behalf of big industry. Where this archaic heritage did not explode the Christian form and assume Teutonic features it gave to German philosophy and music their specific tone. The mythology in National Socialism is not a mere fake, but the spotlight thrown upon this surviving mythology liquidates it altogether. National Socialism has thus accomplished in a few years what other civilizations took centuries to achieve.

The sexual freedom prescribed by the population policy does not cure the anxiety of the world of sexual taboos but expresses mere scorn of love. Love is the irreconcilable foe of the prevailing rationality, for lovers preserve and protect neither themselves nor the collectivity. They throw themselves away; that is why wrath is heaped upon them. Romeo and Juliet died in conflict with society for that which was heralded by this society. In unreasonably surrendering themselves to one another they sustained the freedom of the individual as against the dominion of the world of things. Those who "pollute the race" in National Socialist Germany remain loyal to the life and death of these lovers. In the inhuman world of National Socialism, which reserves the name of hero to clever yet beguiled youths who in conceiving, begetting and dying are but victims of a monstrous population policy, the racial crime resurrects what once was called heroism, namely, loyalty without prospect and reason. The sad tryst of those who cannot change their ways is blinded to the rationality which triumphs outside. The daybreak in which the SS men surprise the careless, lights up the monstrosity that reason has become—ingenuity, cleverness and readiness to strike. These lovers have not kept pace with the course of society and therefore cannot hope for its clemency in the streamlined world. Their agony in the concentration camp, which the shrewd adherents of the Third Reich deem right and just because



those punished were neither reasonable nor clever, reveals the truth behind Fascism's emancipation of sex and behind the concession existence it entails. What is encouraged as wholesome sexuality is an expression of the same fiendish rationality that harries love.

What Fascism does to the victims it selects as examples for its unlimited power seems to defy all reason. Its tortures transcend the power to perceive or imagine; when thought attempts to comprehend the deed it stiffens with horror and is rendered helpless. The new order contradicts reason so fundamentally that reason does not dare to doubt it. Even the consciousness of oppression fades. The more incommensurate become the concentration of power and the helplessness of the individual, the more difficult for him to penetrate the human origin of his misery. The tattered veil of money has been replaced by the veil of technology. The centralization of production which technology has made necessary conceals the voluntary concord among its leaders. More than ever crises take the guise of natural and inevitable phenomena and tend to destroy entire populations as they ravage continents for reserve supplies. The dimensions of this process are so superhuman that even the imagination which has withstood the mutilation of mass culture hesitates to derive this state of affairs from its social origin.

Injustice has never been more blindly accepted as a visitation of superhuman fate than it is under the spell of Fascism today, when everyone talks of revamping society. Hope has been overshadowed by the consciousness of universal doom. Everyone feels that his work perpetuates an infernal machine from which he manages to wheedle enough time to live, time that he proceeds to lose back by attending the machine. Thus he keeps going, expert in handling every situation and in understanding none, scorning death and yet fleeing it. To men in the bourgeois era individual life was of infinite importance because death meant absolute catastrophe. Hamlet's line, "the rest is silence," in which death is followed by oblivion, indicates the origin of the ego. Fascism shatters this fundamental principle. It strikes down that which is tottering, the individual, by teaching him to fear something worse than death. Fear reaches farther than the identity of his consciousness. The individual must abandon the ego and carry on somehow without it. Under Fascism the objects of organization are being disorganized as subjects. They lose their identical character, and are simultaneously Nazi and anti-Nazi, convinced and skeptical, brave and cowardly, clever and stupid. They have renounced all consistency. This inconsistency

into which the ego has been dissolved is the only attitude adequate to a reality which is not defined by so-called plans but by concentration camps. The method of this madness consists in demonstrating to men that they are just as shattered as those in the camps and by this means welding the racial community together. Men have been released from such camps who have taken over the jargon of their jailers and with cold reason and mad consent (the price, as it were, of their survival) tell their story as if it could not have been otherwise than it was, contending that they have not been treated so badly after all. Those who have not yet been jailed behave as if they had already been tortured. They profess everything. The murderers, on the other hand, have adopted the language of the Berlin night club and garment center. The sphere of trade and business remains a reality only in the struggles and transactions among captains of industry and is there removed from the eye of the little man, nay, even of the big man. But the language of market mentality, Jewish slang, the vernacular of salesmen and traders who have long been humiliated, survive on the lips of their suppressors. It is the language of winks, sly hints, complicity in deceit. The Nazis call failure *Pleite*, he who does not watch his step in time is *meschugge*, and an anti-Semitic song says that the Americans have no idea *was sich tut*. The instigators justify their pogrom by saying that once again all was not quite *koscher* with the Jews. Getting through by hook or crook is the secret ideal, and even the SA troopers envy the Jewish shrewdness they strive to imitate reflects the truth which they have to deny to themselves and to destroy. If this truth has once and for all been discarded and men have decided for integral adjustment, if reason has been purged of all morality regardless of cost, and has triumphed over all else, no one may remain outside and look on. The existence of one solitary "unreasonable" man elucidates the shame of the entire nation. His existence testifies to the relativity of the system of radical self-preservation that has been posited as absolute. If all superstition has been abolished to such a degree that only superstition remains, no stubborn man may wander around and seek happiness anywhere except in unrelenting progress. The hatred of Jews, like the lust to murder the insane, is stimulated by their unintelligible faith in a God who has everywhere deserted them and by the unconditional rigidity of the principle they maintain even unwittingly. Suspicion of madness is the unperishable source of persecution. It originates from distrust of one's own pragmatic reason.



Pain is the means of calling men back from the noumenal world into which all empiristic philosophers and even Kant forbade them to penetrate. It was always the best teacher to bring men to reason. Pain leads the resistant and wayward, the phantast and utopian back to themselves. It reduces them to the body, to part of the body. Pain levels and equalizes everything, man and man, man and animal. It absorbs the entire life of the being whom it racks, reducing him to a husk of pain. Mutilation of the ego, with which the whole of mankind has been afflicted, thus again repeats itself in each case of torture. The practical requirements that enmesh man at every moment, the pragmatic rationality of the industrial era, completely absorb the lives of their victims. Pain is the archetype of labor in a divided society and at the same time its organon. Philosophers and theologians have always exalted it. Their paeans to it reflect the fact that mankind has hitherto known labor only as an effluence of domination. They justify pain because it drives men to reason. Luther translates the 90th psalm as "Teach us to learn we must die in order to become prudent." Kant says that "Pain is the sting of activity,"<sup>1</sup> and Voltaire that "this feeling of pain was indispensable to stimulate us to self-preservation."<sup>2</sup> The Inquisitors once justified their abominable service to their predatory rulers by saying that they were commissioned to save the errant soul or to wash out its sins. Their language already pictures heaven as a kind of Third Reich which the unreliable and scandalous could attain by way of a training camp. If one of these unhappy victims of the Inquisition escaped, requests were issued for his extradition describing him "as one insanely led to reject the salutary medicine offered for his cure, and to spurn the wine and oil which were soothing his wounds."<sup>3</sup> The inquisition manifested the rage of those who sensed that the inculcation of Christianity had not quite successfully been accomplished, a rage which later, in Fascism, led to open repudiation of Christianity. Fascism has reinstated pain on its throne. During the breathing spells of civilization, at least in the civilized mother countries, brute physical pain was inflicted only upon the abjectly poor; to others it loomed on the horizon only as the *ultima ratio* of society. Under Fascism society has invoked this *ultima ratio*. The contradiction between what is requested of man and what can be offered to him has become so striking, the ideology so thin, the discontents in civilization so great that they must be compensated

<sup>1</sup>*Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht*, § 61.

<sup>2</sup>Voltaire, *A Philosophical Dictionary*. Article on "Good" in *The Works of Voltaire*, New York 1901, Vol. V, p. 264.

<sup>3</sup>Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, New York 1922, Vol. I, p. 459.

through annihilation of those who do not conform, political enemies, Jews, asocial persons, the insane. The new order of Fascism is Reason revealing itself as unreason.

What remains of reason in its contemporary decline, however, is not just the perseverance of self-preservation and the persistence of that horror in which it culminates. The age old definition of reason in terms of self-preservation already implied the curtailment of reason itself. The propositions of idealistic philosophy that reason distinguishes man from the animal (propositions in which the animal is humiliated just as man is in the converse propositions of the materialist doctors) contain the truth that through reason man frees himself of the fetters of nature. This liberation, however, does not entitle man to dominate nature (as the philosophers held) but to comprehend it. Society, governed by the self-preserving rationality of *élites*, has always also preserved the life of the masses, although in a wrong and accidental form. Reason has borne a true relation not only to one's own existence but to living as such; this function of transcending self-preservation is concomitant with self-preservation, with obeying and adapting to objective ends. Reason could recognize and denounce the forms of injustice and thus emancipate itself from them. As the faculty of calling things by their name, reason is more than the alienated life that preserves itself in the destruction of others and of itself. To be sure, reason cannot hope to keep aloof from history and to intuit the true order of things, as ontological ideologies contend. In the inferno to which triumphant reason has reduced the world it loses its illusions, but in doing so it becomes capable of facing this inferno and recognizing it for what it is. Skepticism has done its job. Ideals seem so futile today that they can change as rapidly as agreements and alliances do. Ideology consists more in what men are like than in what they believe—in their mental constrictedness, their complete dependence upon associations. They experience everything only within the conventional framework of concepts. Any object is comprised under the accepted schemata even before it is perceived. This and not the convictions of men constitutes the false consciousness of today. Today the ideological incorporation of men into society takes place through their "biological" pre-formation for the controlled collectivity. Even the unique becomes a function and appendage of the centralized economy. Culture, exalting the unique as the resistive element amid a universal sameness of things is an ingredient rather than an opponent of mass culture; the unique becomes the shingle of monopoly. The essence of Paris and of Austria had become merely a function of that America from which they differed. The self in



dissolution becomes recognizable as ideology. It was not only the basis of modern self-preservation but also the veil concealing the forces that destroyed it. What applies to the unique equally applies to the living self. With the dissolution of the self the disproportionate reaches of power become the only obstacle to insight into their obsolescence. Mutilated as men are, in the duration of a brief moment they can become aware that in the world which has been thoroughly rationalized they can dispense with the interests of self-preservation which still set them one against the other. The terror which pushes reason is at the same time the last means of stopping it, so close has truth come. If the atomized and disintegrating men of today have become capable of living without property, without location, without time, they also have abandoned the ego in which all prudence and all stupidity of historical reason as well as its compliance with domination was sustained. The progress of reason that leads to its self-destruction has come to an end; there is nothing left but barbarism or freedom.

## Veblen's Attack on Culture

*Remarks Occasioned by the Theory of the Leisure Class*

By T. W. Adorno

Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* became famous for its doctrine of conspicuous consumption, according to which the consumption of goods to a large extent takes place not to satisfy any true wants, or what Veblen chooses to call the "fullness of life," but rather to maintain social prestige or "status." This applies to the whole history of mankind from the very early stage which Veblen characterized as the "predatory" up to the present. From his critique of consumption as a mere ostentation, Veblen has derived inferences that are in the aesthetic sense close to those of functionalism (as these were formulated about the same time by Adolf Loos) and in the practical sense to those of technocracy. Historically effective though they were, however, these elements of Veblen's sociology do not sufficiently point up the objective motives underlying his thinking. His attack is directed against the barbarian character of culture. The term "barbarian culture," which occurs in the very first sentence,<sup>1</sup> crops up again and again throughout his main work. In its precise meaning the term applies only to one particular phase of history, an exceedingly broad one, however, extending from the time of the ancient hunter and warrior to that of the feudal lord and the absolute monarch, whose relation to the capitalist age is purposely left obscure. Yet there is an obvious intention, in numerous passages, to denounce the modern era as barbarian at the very points where it most solemnly raises the claim to be culture. The very features through which this era appears to have escaped bare utility and to have reached the humane level are supposed to be relics of historical epochs long past. Emancipation from the realm of utility is regarded as nothing but the index of a uselessness deriving from the fact that cultural "institutions" as well as anthropological qualities do not change simultaneously with or in conformity with economic modes of production, but lag behind them and at times openly contradict them. If one follows the trend of Veblen's ideas rather than the statements which waver between the vitriolic and the cautious,

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, The Modern Library, New York 1934, p. 1.



one might say that those cultural characteristics in which greed, the desire of advantage, and confinement to the immediate appear to be overcome are nothing but the residues of objectively obsolete forms of greed and desire of advantage and bad immediacy. They originate from an urge to prove to men that one is exempt from crudely practical considerations; more specifically, that one can spend one's time on the useless in order to enhance one's position in the social hierarchy and widen the measure of one's social honor, and thus finally reaffirm one's power over others. Culture turns against utility for the sake of an indirect utility. It is marred by the "life-lie." In tracking down this life-lie Veblen's analysis penetrates to the most harmless-looking phenomena of culture. Under his gloomy gaze the walking stick and the lawn, the umpire and the domesticated animal become significant allegories of the barbarian essence of culture.

This method, no less than the contents of his teaching, led people to attack Veblen as a crazy and destructive outsider. At the same time, however, his theory has been assimilated. Today it is widely and officially recognized, and his terminology, like that of Freud, has permeated journalism. This may be regarded as an example of the objective tendency to disarm a tiresome opponent through accepting his views and labeling them according to standard formulas. Yet Veblen's thought is not wholly out of harmony with this scheme of acceptance; he is less of an outsider than he seems to be at first sight. The idea of conspicuous consumption has its long history. It goes back to the postulate of Greek ethics that the true life be one according to the pure nature of man rather than to values arbitrarily posited by him. In its Christian form the critique of waste plays a great role in the works of the patristic writers who accept art only in so far as it "produces the necessary and not the superfluous."<sup>2</sup> Nowhere was irrationality in culture more clearly denounced than by some sceptical humanists of the sixteenth century.<sup>3</sup> It permeates the whole occidental philosophy and theology. The attack on culture was sustained by the intellectual movement which in the second half of the nineteenth century challenged the official morals of the prevailing order as hypocritical and impotent and pointed to the com-

<sup>2</sup>Johannes Chrysostomos, *Kommentar zum Evangelium des heiligen Matthäus*, Kempten and Munich 1916, 3, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup>Thus Agrippa von Nettesheim (1486-1535) criticizes conspicuous wastefulness in architecture "which is of no use whatsoever to men and serves only for being looked at and admired, or, as Plinius says, is built up with great expense only for the sake of pomp and ostentation, that is, in order to show that somebody has a lot of money. . . . Here belong also our proud and magnificently constructed churches and bell towers." Agrippa von Nettesheim, *Die Eitelkeit und Unsicherheit der Wissenschaften*, ed. Fritz Mauthner, Munich 1913, 1, p. 111f.

ing crisis of European civilization, a movement that counts among its protagonists the foremost writers of the period. Veblen incorporated some of the underlying motives of this movement into sociology. Scientifically he depended largely on Spencer and Darwin, the German historical school of Gustav Schmoller and above all on American pragmatism.<sup>4</sup> "The life of man in society, just like the life of other species, is a struggle for existence, and therefore it is a process of selective adaptation. The evolution of social structure has been a process of natural selection of institutions. The progress which has been and is being made in human institutions and in human character may be set down, broadly, to a natural selection of the fittest habits of thought and to a process of enforced adaptation of individuals to the environment which has progressively changed with the growth of the community and with the changing institutions under which men have lived."<sup>5</sup> The concept of adaptation or adjustment is central. Man is subject to life as to the experimental conditions set down by some unknown laboratory director. The achievement expected of him if he is to survive is to adapt himself to the natural and historical conditions imposed upon him. The implicit measure of the truth of ideas is whether they further this adaptation and contribute to the survival of the species.<sup>6</sup> Veblen's critique always applies to the failure of this adaptation. He is quite aware of the difficulties the doctrine has to face within the societal realm, realizing that the conditions to which men have to adjust themselves are largely produced by society. He knows of the interaction between the internal and the external and this compels him steadily to refine and modify the adaptive doctrine, but he hardly ever reaches the point where the absolute necessity of adaptation itself is called into question.

<sup>4</sup>Apart from William James (cf. Wesley C. Mitchell, *What Veblen Taught*, New York 1936, p. xxvi) one has to think chiefly of Peirce's writings here. Pragmatism is meant in a somewhat broader sense, derived from Veblen's concept of the interconnection between intellectual functions and evolutionary adaptation. Veblen conceives this adaptation, it should be emphasized, as involving the totality of the societal process, measured by the stage of technological productive powers, in avowed contrast to the isolated, particular interest of groups or individuals. Hence Veblen in his essay, "The Place of Science in Modern Civilization," has attacked pragmatism of the kind represented in Dewey's earlier works. In the American discussion he has been numbered among the anti-pragmatists. Although his critique of the "practical" spirit doubtless expresses an anti-pragmatist impulse, Veblen's subsumption of truth under its usefulness for the societal whole may suffice to justify the underscoring of the pragmatist aspect in the present study.

<sup>5</sup>Veblen, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>6</sup>Thus, Veblen's critique of erudition in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* centers around the antagonism of honorific and useful learning without asking whether some third might not exist, the objective character of Truth (cf. p. 394). Inasmuch, however, as Veblen urges the spirit of an objective science the "idle curiosity" of which is emphatically distinguished from any immediate practical interest, his theory contains the counter-motive as well. He thinks more dialectically than his official anti-Hegelianism leads one to believe.



Progress is adaptation and nothing else. The world to which he wants men to adjust themselves is the world of industrial technics. Concretely, progress means to Veblen assimilating the forms of thought and of "life"—that is to say, the sphere of economic consumption—to those of industrial technics. The tool of this assimilation is Science. Veblen conceives it as the universal application of the principle of causality free of archaic animistic habits of thought. Causal thinking means thinking in terms of objective, quantitative relations deriving from the process of industrial production, rather than in personalistic terms. The notion of teleology in particular is to be strictly excluded.

In order to come face to face with the force responsible for the conjunction of all the motives in Veblen's thinking, one has to look for his basic intellectual experience. It may be characterized as that of false uniqueness. As the mass production of identical goods and their monopolistic distribution advances and as the framework of highly industrialized life permits less and less the genuine individuation of a *hic et nunc*, the pretension of the *hic et nunc* to escape universal fungibility becomes more illusory. It is as if each thing's claim to be something special were mocking at a situation in which everyone and everything is incessantly subject to a perennial sameness. Veblen cannot stand this mockery. His rebellion actually lies in his obstinate insistence that this world present itself with that abstract sameness of its commodities which is prescribed by its economical and technological condition. In the present phase, in which "deliciously different" and "quaint" have become frozen standard patterns of advertising for a long time, this insight of Veblen's is easily accessible. He attained it, however, at a time when it was not yet so obvious. He saw through the pseudo-individuality of things long before technics had abolished their genuine individuality altogether. He exposed the sham of the unique through the inconsistency in unique objects themselves, through the contradiction between their esthetic form and their practical function. Their human functions are repudiated by the inhumanity of their forms.

He discovered an aspect of idle show which has largely escaped aesthetic criticism but which may well contribute to explaining the shock and catastrophe which so many buildings and interiors of the nineteenth century express today. The mark of the oppressive is on them. Under Veblen's glance their ornaments become menacing because they manifest their relation to old models of violence and domination. Nowhere does he indicate this more strikingly than in a passage on charity buildings: "Certain funds, for instance, may have

been set apart as a foundation for a foundling asylum or a retreat for invalids. The diversion of expenditure to honorific waste in such cases is not uncommon enough to cause surprises or even to raise a smile. An appreciable share of the funds is spent in the construction of an edifice faced with some aesthetically objectionable but expensive stone, covered with grotesque and incongruous details, and designed, in its battlemented walls and turrets and its massive portals and strategic approaches, to suggest certain barbaric methods of warfare."<sup>7</sup> The emphasis laid upon the threatening aspects of pomp and ornamentation is significant in relation to the deeper, hidden and perhaps unconscious notion of the trend of history that underlies his theory. The images of aggressive barbarism which he dug up in the false glitter of the nineteenth century, and particularly the decorative ambitions of the years after 1870, struck his sense of progress as relics of past epochs or as "reversions" on the part of those who did no productive work themselves, the "industrially exempt" who were, so to say, behind their time. Yet these selfsame features which he called archaic express in his vision the dawning horror of the future. His sad glance disavows his progressive philosophy.<sup>8</sup> The sinister aspect of the fortresslike foundling asylum, which struck him as a sign of oppression, has since revealed itself as the herald of the sinister reality practiced today in the torture palaces of the National Socialists. Veblen sees all the culture of mankind assuming the aspect of terror that has come into the open during its last phase. The fascination of the impending doom explains and justifies the injustice Veblen does to culture. This culture, which has today taken the form of advertising merely to keep men in line from day to day, was never anything else to Veblen but advertising, the display of booty, power and appropriated surplus value. In grandiose misanthropy he neglected everything which goes beyond this display. His obsession prompted him to see the bloody traces of injustice even within the image of happiness. The metropolises of the nineteenth century phantasmagorically assembled the pillars of the Attic temple, the Gothic cathedrals and the spiteful palaces of the Italian city states in order to demonstrate their unlimited command over the history of mankind and its goods. Veblen pays them back. To him the original

<sup>7</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 349.

<sup>8</sup>In Veblen's last writings his straightforward, optimistic belief in progress breaks down. "All of his other works suggest the imbecility of modern business enterprise and an expectation that the underlying population will take matters in hand, but the tone of *Absentee Ownership* suggests more the imbecility of the underlying population for continuing to put up with the current state of affairs, and an expectation that business enterprise will tend to become more feudalistic in character until modern civilization collapses." (Josef Dorfman, *Thorstein Veblen and his America*, New York 1934, p. 467.)



temples, cathedrals and palaces are already as false as their imitations. He explains culture through the trash, not vice versa. One could not express this universal hypostasis of the monopolistic phase in which culture is swallowed up by advertising more simply than Stuart Chase in his preface to the *Theory of the Leisure Class*: "People above the line of bare subsistence, in this age and all earlier ages, do not use the surplus, which society has given them, primarily for useful purposes."<sup>9</sup> With regard to "all earlier ages" Veblen neglects all traits of cultural objects which are different from today's commodity culture. In so far as the products of human industry were not conceived as serving any useful ends, their *raison d'être*, according to this theory, was that of conspicuous consumption. But they express also the belief in the real power of magic rites; the sex motive and its symbolism, which, by the way, is not mentioned throughout the *Theory of the Leisure Class*; the compulsion of artistic expression; all longing to escape the sphere of utility. The arch-enemy of all teleological speculation, he proceeds, against his own will, according to the scheme of a satanic teleology. His subtle wit does not shrink from the crudest rationalism in order ironically to expose the universal command of fetishism over the supposed realm of freedom. In his intransigent concept of world history culture plays the role of advertising from the very beginning: it advertises domination.

The malicious glance is fertile. It gets at phenomena which, though they belong to the *façade* of society, have too serious a societal impact to be coped with through harmlessly progressive slogans. Sport belongs here. Veblen has bluntly characterized every kind of sport as a manifestation of violence, oppression and exploitation, from the children's war games and college athletics to the big shows of football and baseball: "These manifestations of the predatory temperament are all to be classed under the head of exploit. They are partly simple and unreflected expressions of an attitude of emulative ferocity, partly activities deliberately entered upon with a view to gaining repute for prowess. Sports of all kinds are of the same general character."<sup>10</sup> The passion for sport, according to Veblen, is of a retrogressive kind: "The ground of an addiction to sports is an archaic spiritual constitution."<sup>11</sup> Nothing, however, is more modern than this archaism. The sport displays are models of the fascist rallies. They are "tolerated excesses" combining cruelty and aggression with the authoritarian penchant for discipline. Veblen has an un-

<sup>9</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. xiv.

<sup>10</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 255.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

failing sense of the affinity between the sport excess and the manipulating élite. "If a person so endowed with a proclivity for exploits is in a position to guide the development of habits in the adolescent members of the community, the influence which he exerts in the direction of conservation and reversion to prowess may be very considerable. This is the significance, for instance, of the fostering care latterly bestowed by many clergymen and other pillars of society upon 'boys' brigades' and similarly pseudo-military organizations."<sup>12</sup> His insight goes even further. He recognizes sport as pseudo-activity, as canalization of energies which otherwise might become dangerous, as the investiture of meaningless action with the spurious insignia of seriousness and significance. He deduces sport from the nature of the leisure class. The less one has to earn one's own living the more one feels called upon to give the illusion of serious, socially reputable, yet unprofitable work. At the same time, however, sport is adequate to the practical, efficient, "predatory" spirit. It brings the antagonistic desiderata of purposeful behavior and waste of time to their common denominator. Thus, however, it becomes an element of swindle, of "make believe." In the light of this analysis sport loses its harmlessness. To be sure, the analysis ought to be supplemented in order for it to obtain its full societal weight. For sport is not merely characterized by the desire to do violence to others, nor even by the desire to obey and to suffer, but by the productive forces inherent in sport though mutilated by sport itself. Only Veblen's rationalist psychology forbids him to acknowledge the element of bad pliancy in its full significance. It is this element which characterizes sport apart from its being a vestige of some past social form as a means of adaptation to the rising industrial spirit, an adaptation the lack of which troubles Veblen. Modern sport, one might say, attempts to restore to the body a part of the functions it has been deprived of through the machine. This attempt, however, is made in order to train men the more inexorably to serve the machine. Sport virtually transforms the body itself into a kind of machine.

Another complex in Veblen's critique of culture appears less timely, the so-called woman question. The socialist programs regard the final emancipation of women as such a truism that for a long time analysis of the concrete position of women has been dispensed with. In middle class literature the woman question has been regarded as comical ever since Shaw. Strindberg perverted it into the man question just as Hitler perverted the emancipation of the Jews into an emancipation from them. The impossibility of liberating

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<sup>12</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 254f.



women in an unfree society is ascribed by that society not to itself but to the advocates of freedom. The frailty of the ideals of emancipation which brings them close to neurosis is taken as their refutation. The erotically unprejudiced girl who approves of the world as long as she can go to the movies with her date has supplanted Ibsen's Nora and Hedda. If she knew of them she would, in racy lingo, reproach them with lacking a sense of reality. Veblen, who has much in common with Ibsen<sup>13</sup> also in other respects, is one of the last significant philosophers of reform who dares to take the woman question seriously. He is a belated apologist of the feminist movement, who, however, had to do justice to misogynous experiences such as those expressed in the work of Strindberg and Weininger. Thus woman becomes to him the enigmatic image of an antagonistic society. He knows of her patriarchal humiliation. Her position, which he numbers among the throwbacks to the age of the hunter and the warrior, reminds him of that of the servant. She enjoys free time and luxury only in order to enhance the status of her master. This implies two contradictory consequences. In some independence from Veblen's wording, they may be stated as follows: on the one hand the woman is exempted in a certain sense from "practical life" by her very position of slavery and as an object of ostentation—no matter how humiliating it may be. She is, or at least was in Veblen's time, not exposed to economic competition to the same degree as the man. In certain social strata and at certain epochs she was well enough protected not to develop the qualities which Veblen calls those of the predatory spirit. Through her aloofness from the social process of production she maintains the traits of a person not yet completely "possessed," not yet completely shackled by society. Thus the female member of the leisure class is the one who appears particularly fit to desert her class and to contribute to a more humane and more reasonable society. In all this, however, there lies a counter-tendency the most striking symptom of which is, according to Veblen, the pervasive conservatism of woman. She has no important part in the historical development of productive forces. This, and the state of dependency in which she is kept, produces a mutilating effect which overbalances the opportunity offered her by her aloofness from economic competition. "The woman finds herself at home and content in a range of ideas which to the man are in great measure alien and imbecile."<sup>14</sup> If one would follow this trend of thought further, one might say that women have escaped the sphere of capitalistic production only to fall the more completely into the clutches of the sphere

<sup>13</sup>As to Veblen's knowledge of Ibsen, cf. Dorfman, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>14</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 324.

of consumption. They are fascinated and restricted by the immediacy of the surface world of commodities no less than men are fascinated and restricted by the immediacy of profit. Women mirror back to male society the injustice it does to them and assimilate themselves to the commodities among which they are imprisoned. Veblen's critical insight is not a whit behind the Freudian one of the ultimate identity of the male and female structures of drives. It indicates, however, a far-reaching change within the Utopia of emancipation itself. Hope can no longer content itself as easily as it could during the age of woman's emancipation. The idea of emancipation today seems merely to assimilate the mutilated social character of women to the mutilated social character of men. In a free society the face of the efficient, shrewd, practical man ought to disappear together with that of the suffering woman.

Veblen, however, did not draw these consequences. To be sure, his critique of the existent is based upon the insight that it tends to cripple men by denying fulfillment to them and manipulating them as mere tools of the felicitous few—"the trouble is that business enterprises are run for profit, not to meet human needs."<sup>15</sup> Veblen certainly would have endorsed the ideal of human happiness as against the principle of exploitation which refuses such a happiness not only to what he calls the "underlying population" but also, according to his analysis, to the "leisure class" itself. Closer scrutiny, however, shows that the goal of happiness is not so concretely omnipresent in his writings as one might expect it to be. His critique of "institutions" is uncompromising, but he seems to be so fascinated by societal organization that it remains hypostatized even in his own image of rationality and endangers the humanity which a rational societal organization is supposed to serve. This may best be demonstrated through a passage in one of his later writings, where he appears most emphatically to formulate human fulfillment and—implicitly—happiness as his ideal: "The mechanical technology is impersonal and dispassionate, and its end is very simply to serve human needs, without fear or favor or respect of persons, prerogatives, or politics. It makes up an industrial system of an unexampled character—a mechanically balanced and interlocking system of work to be done, the prime requisite of whose working is a painstaking and intelligent co-ordination of the processes at work, and an equally painstaking allocation of mechanical powers and materials. The foundation and driving force of it all is a massive body by technological knowledge, of a highly impersonal and altogether unbusinesslike nature, running

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<sup>15</sup>Wesley C. Mitchell, *op. cit.*, p. xliii.

in close contact with the material sciences, on which it draws freely at every turn—exactly specialized, endlessly detailed, reaching out into all domains of empirical fact.”<sup>16</sup> It is more than doubtful whether one is entitled to attribute to mechanical technology *in abstracto* any “end” of its own without relating it to the concrete nature of the society within which it functions. As far as technology has such an end, it is production *per se*, only indirectly related to those very needs which it ought to fulfill. Technological planning as advocated by Veblen has at least an intrinsic tendency to treat human needs as a function of the process of production, whereas this dependence of men on the mechanisms of industrial production is symptomatic of the present state of affairs and ought to be reversed. Veblen, however, is ready to regard the engineers and technicians as a kind of *élite* to whom the rational organization of society might be entrusted. But he does not realize that the distinction between such an *élite* and the rest of mankind is irrational itself and tends to perpetuate the very same hierarchy of “status” which he expects will disappear through the materialization of his technological order. “This will call for diligent teamwork on the part of a suitable group of economists and engineers, who will have to be drawn together by self-selection on the basis of a common interest in productive efficiency, economical use of resources, and an equitable distribution of the consumable output.”<sup>17</sup> The Saint-Simonist conception of the suitable group of economists and engineers is a highly dubious one. Economists and engineers, by virtue of their objective functions, occupy a relatively high place in the very same hierarchy Veblen attacks. He does not differentiate between their technological function and their intrinsic social character. To be sure, their functions are upset by today’s irrational economy but this in no way qualifies them to select themselves as dictators. Like all subservience, their subservience to technology contains potential domination, and prepares them to take things into their own hands. It is characteristic that “equitable distribution” appears only as incidental, as it were, within Veblen’s technological scheme, instead of determining its every step. Veblen is always tempted to make a fetish of production. This is grounded in his anthropology the supreme category of which is the “instinct of workmanship.” His idea of happiness always remains related to this category. He never reaches an unequivocal decision as between the glorification of labor as such and the plea for the final aims of this labor. Beneath the outer armor of this rebellious arch-enemy of the theological tradition of New England hides the asceticism of the

<sup>16</sup>Veblen, *The Engineers and the Price System*, New York 1934, p. 132.

<sup>17</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 152.



Lutheran peasant, not only as a psychological force but as a pervasive element of theory. Though he incessantly attacks taboos, his analysis stops short at the idea that labor is sacred. He feels that this culture does not attribute enough honor<sup>18</sup> to its own work but finds its nefarious prestige in exemption from work, in leisure.

The truth herein is that leisure as practiced reflects the pressure on human labor which makes leisure possible. Veblen stands for the bad conscience of leisure. He confronts middle class society with its own principle of utility and demonstrates to it that according to its own criteria its culture is waste and sham, that it is so irrational as to refute the rationality of the whole system. He has something of the quality of the burgher who takes the postulate of thrift quite seriously. Thus, he reads the whole culture as the senseless expenditure of the show-off if not of the bankrupt. The one-track persistence with which he plays on this motif helps him to reveal the antagonistic character of a society which can maintain its own interest of profit only by trespassing at every step upon its own calculus, building up a whole system of Potemkin villages. Veblen was not a bad musician in the sense of the dictum, according to which one has to play their own melody to petrified conditions in order to make them dance. But he was a musician capable of reading his own part only and not the full score of the devilish concert. Hence his overemphasis on the limited sphere of production. There is implicit in his doctrine a distinction similar to the one between *raffend* and *schaffend*. He distinguishes two categories of modern economic institutions, "pecuniary" and "industrial"<sup>19</sup> and divides according to these categories the occupation of men and the behaviors supposedly corresponding to them. "So far as men's habits of thought are shaped by the competitive process of acquisition and tenure; so far as their economic functions are comprised within the range of ownership of wealth as conceived in terms of exchange value, and its management and financiering through a permutation of value; so far their experi-

<sup>18</sup>Whereas Veblen violently attacks the "honorific" institutions of exploitive society, he maintains the traditional protestant conception of the dignity of labor and expresses the hope that this dignity will finally be recognized under socialism. "Under such a social order [the socialist] where common labor would no longer be a mark of peculiar economic necessity and consequent low economic rank on the part of the laborer, it is even conceivable that labor might practically come to assume that character of nobility in the eyes of society at large, which it now sometimes assumes in the speculations of the well-to-do, in their complacent moods." (Veblen, *The Place of Science in Modern Civilization*, New York 1932, p. 401.) It is highly significant that his critical analysis at this point stops at the concept of nobility which he elsewhere would not hesitate to unmask as the product of predatory "status."

<sup>19</sup>*The Theory of the Leisure Class*, p. 229. Cf. Mitchell, *op. cit.*, p. xxxviii. The distinction has a long prehistory in America as well as in Europe. We mention here only two of the authors known to Veblen who make this distinction: Lester Frank Ward and Boehm-Bawerk.

ence in economic life favours the survival and accentuation of the predatory temperament and habits of thought."<sup>20</sup> The passage alludes to Marxian terminology. Because, however, he did not visualize the social process as the totality which it is, Veblen was led to divide human activity within the given social system into a productive and an unproductive part with the tacit implication that one could dispense with the latter and maintain the former. He furthermore directs his criticism of the capitalistic mode of production, not so much against appropriation as against the mechanism of distribution.<sup>21</sup> That this is actually at the bottom of his critique he demonstrates by talking about "that class of persons and that range of duties in the economic process which have to do with the ownership of enterprises engaged in competitive industry; especially those fundamental lines of economic management which are classed as financing operations. To these may be added the greater part of mercantile occupations."<sup>22</sup> Only in the light of this distinction can one succeed in grasping what Veblen actually has against the leisure class, or as he prefers to call it in his later writings, "the kept classes." He does not object so much to the pressure which it exercises but to the fact that there is not sufficient pressure upon the leisure class itself in line with his own puritan ethos of workmanship. He implicitly chides the leisure class for its chance to escape, no matter how twisted this chance may be. He regards it as an archaism that the economically independent are not yet completely beset by the exigencies of life: "An archaic habit of mind persists because no effectual economic pressure constrains this class to an adaptation of its habits of thought to the changing situation."<sup>23</sup> Veblen advocates this adaptation all the time. To be sure, the countermotive, leisure interpreted as the prerequisite of *humanitas*, is not alien to him. But a typical mechanism of the positivist approach becomes effective here: he thinks pluralistically. He is willing to concede its right to leisure and even to waste, but merely "aesthetically." As an economist he does not want to have anything to do with it. One must not ignore the pathetic position to which the aesthetic category is relegated by this half-ironical division of interests, but the more urgent problem comes to the fore, namely, what the term economic actually means to Veblen. The question is not how far Veblen's institutionalism falls within the academic discipline of

<sup>20</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 229f.

<sup>21</sup>Here, too, the countermotive as well occurs in Veblen, in his critique of the captain of industry. By favorably contrasting the engineer to the latter, Veblen still appears to maintain the first motive as the stronger one.

<sup>22</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 230.

<sup>23</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 319.

economics proper but the meaning of his own concept of the economic. This concept, however, in the last analysis comes very close to that of the business man he despises elsewhere, who protests against unnecessary expense as uneconomic. What Veblen dislikes about capitalism is its waste rather than its exploitation. He dislikes every superfluous action. The concepts of the useful and the useless here presupposed are not analyzed. This makes for the pluralism of Veblen's method. He succeeds in proving that society proceeds uneconomically according to its own criteria. The proof is both much and little. Much, because it makes the irrationality of reason glaringly visible; little, because it falls short of grasping the close relation between the useful and the useless. Veblen leaves the problem of the useless to categories predefined by the special sciences and alien to his own basic concepts, while he himself takes on the role of an efficiency expert whose vote may be overruled by his aesthetical colleagues. He does not recognize the contradictions among scientific departments as an expression of those fundamental societal antagonisms the symptoms of which he otherwise excoriates. While as an economist he takes culture too lightly, striking it as "waste" from the budget, he secretly surrenders to its mere existence in society outside the range of budget making. He fails to see that through the departmental limitations of the observer no decision as to the ultimate right or wrong of cultural phenomena can be reached.

These limitations deny Veblen any insight into the truth hidden even within the illusionary sphere. He remains blind to the motives for the attitude against which his basic experience rebels. In a fragment written by the German poet, Frank Wedekind, and published after his death, there occurs the remark that *Kitsch* is the Gothic or the Baroque of our time. The historical necessity of such *Kitsch* has been misjudged by Veblen. To him, the false castle is nothing but a reversion. He knows nothing of its intrinsic modernity and visualizes the illusionary images of uniqueness in the era of mass production as mere vestiges instead of "responses" to capitalistic mechanization which betray something of the latter's essence. The realm of objects which function in Veblen's conspicuous consumption is actually a realm of artificial imagery. It is created by a desperate compulsion to escape from the abstract sameness of things by a kind of self-made and futile *promesse de bonheur*. Men prefer to embody the hope of childhood in products of their craft and then believe in their own fiction, rather than cast away that hope. The artificial imagery into which commodities are transshaped is not only the projection of opaque human relationships upon the world of things; it serves also to create the chimerical deities of



that which cannot be expressed in terms of production and adaptation to production, but which still obeys the principle of the market. Veblen's thinking bogged down before this antinomy. Still, the antinomy is what makes show a "style." Show is more than a mere false investment of labor. It represents the universal endeavor to summon into reality the idea of that which cannot be exchanged. This futile endeavor is universal and a "style" because the pressure and drudgery which it counteracts is universal. The reversion to the distant past upon which Veblen puts the main emphasis is but another aspect of the futility of this endeavor. The relationship of progress ("modernity") to retrogression ("archaism") may be put in the form of a thesis. In a society in which productive powers develop and are fettered at the same time and as a result of the same principle, each progress in technics always means an archaic reversion somewhere else. It is this "balancing up," this equivalence which invests class society with what is essentially "historyless" and ever the same, and which justifies calling it, in a gigantic abbreviation, "pre-history." Veblen's talk about the barbarian normal<sup>24</sup> exhibits an inkling of this. Barbarism is normal because it does not consist in mere rudiments but is perpetually reproduced in proportion to man's dominion over nature. Veblen has taken this constant balance too lightly, however, no matter how close he comes to acknowledging it. He has noticed the temporal disparity between the castle and the railway station but not the law behind this disparity. The railway station assumes the aspect of the castle but this aspect is its truth. Only when the technological world is a direct servant of domination is it capable of shedding the disguise. Only in fascism does it equal itself.

Veblen overlooks the compulsion within modern archaism. He believes that the artificial imagery may be eliminated by simple institutional changes within the existing society. This is, in the last analysis, why he stops short at the societal *quaestio iuris* of luxury and waste which, with the zeal of a world reformer, he longs to abolish. One may well speak of the double character of luxury. One side of it is that on which Veblen concentrates his attack: the section of the social product that is not expended to fulfill human wants and human happiness but is wasted in order to maintain obsolete and shackling production relations. The other aspect of luxury is the expenditure of parts of the social product that aid the reproduction of human working capacity neither directly nor indirectly but serve man as a man in so far as he has not completely fallen victim

<sup>24</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 218.

to the principle of usefulness even in class society. While Veblen does not explicitly distinguish these two sides of luxury, he undoubtedly intends to abolish the first as conspicuous consumption and to retain the second in the name of the fullness of life. But the blunt character of this intention makes manifest the weakness of the theory. For in capitalistic society one can as little isolate *faux frais* and happiness in luxury as one can isolate exchange value and use value in labor. Whereas happiness occurs only when men intermittently escape the stranglehold of society, the concrete form of their happiness always contains the totality of social conditions of the situation in which they live.<sup>25</sup> Thus the lover's happiness does not relate merely to the beloved as a human being in herself, not even to the body in itself, but to the beloved in all her social concreteness and in her social appearance. Walter Benjamin once wrote that it is erotically as important to the man that the woman he loves appear in his company as that she give herself to him. Veblen would have joined in the bourgeois jeering at this statement and would have talked about conspicuous consumption. But the happiness that man actually finds cannot be severed altogether from conspicuous consumption. Men themselves are products of the given society. Theirs is no happiness which is not related to their cravings conditioned by this society, just as they know of no happiness which would not transcend these limitations. Abstract utopian thought which fails to take this paradox into account readily turns against happiness and supports the very same order of things against which it contends. For as the abstract utopia starts to wash out of happiness the hallmarks of the existent, it is forced to renounce every concrete claim to happiness. Even as they destroy their own happiness and replace it with the prestige of things—Veblen here speaks of social confirmation<sup>26</sup>—they somehow give testimony of the secret underlying all pomp and ostentation, that there is no individual happiness which does not virtually imply the happiness of society as a whole. Even the invidious, the display of status, and the urge to “impress,”

<sup>25</sup>The fact that Veblen does not sufficiently articulate the dialectics of luxury comes to the fore in his attitude towards the beautiful. He attempts to purge the beautiful of pomp and ostentation. Thus, however, he derobes it of every concrete societal quality and falls back to the pre-Hegelian standpoint of a purely formal concept of beauty based on categories of mere nature, such as mathematical proportion. His discussion of beauty is so abstract because there is no concrete beauty without an intrinsic element of injustice. Consequently he ought, like Tolstoi in his late period, to advocate the abolition of art. Yet, he avoids this conclusion. Here his pluralism comes into play. He supplements his economic principle of thriftiness by an aesthetic principle of the nonillusionary, the functional. But in being torn apart from each other both these postulates approach absurdity. The complete expediency of the beautiful contradicts its aimlessness, its being non-practical. Veblen's idea of the economic *qua* the thrifty contradicts the idea of a non-oppressive society which otherwise guides him.

<sup>26</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 136.

by which the manifestations of happiness are invariably disfigured in a competitive society, implicitly contains the recognition that true happiness would exist only if the joy of the individual were free of its privational character. The features of luxury that Veblen calls invidious, the bad will, not only reproduce injustice but also express a disfigured appeal to justice.

It is most ironic that in Veblen faith in Utopia necessarily takes the form which he so vigorously condemns in middle class society, the form of retrogression, or "reversion." Hope, for him, lies solely with the primitive history of mankind. Every happiness barred to him because of the pressures of dreamless adjustment and adaptation to reality, to the conditions of the industrial world, shows him its image in some early golden age of mankind. "The conditions under which men lived in the most primitive stages of associated life that can properly be called human, seem to have been of a peaceful kind; and the character—the temperament and spiritual attitude—of men under these early conditions or environment and institutions seems to have been of a peaceful and unaggressive, not to say an indolent, cast. For the immediate purpose this peacable cultural stage may be taken to mark the initial phase of social development. So far as concerns the present argument, the dominant spiritual feature of this presumptive initial phase of culture seems to have been an unreflecting, unformulated sense of group solidarity, largely expressing itself in a complacent, but by no means strenuous, sympathy with all facility of human life, and an uneasy revulsion against apprehended inhibition or futility of life."<sup>27</sup> He views the aspects of demythification and *humanitas* exhibited by mankind during the bourgeois age not as symptoms of its coming to self-consciousness but rather as a retrogression to its elysian first stage: "Under the circumstances of the sheltered situation in which the leisure class is placed there seems, therefore, to be something of a reversion to the range of non-invidious impulses that characterize the ante-predatory savage culture. The reversion comprises both the sense of workmanship and the proclivity to indolence and good-fellowship."<sup>28</sup> Veblen, the technocrat, longs for the restoration of the most ancient. He calls the "New-Woman" movement a conglomerate of "blind and incoherent efforts to rehabilitate the woman's pre-glacial standing."<sup>29</sup> Such provocative formulations today appear to strike blows at the positivist sense of facts. At this point, however, a most curious relationship in Veblen's

<sup>27</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 219.

<sup>28</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 351.

<sup>29</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 356.



sociology comes into the open, that between his positivism and his Rousseauist ideal<sup>30</sup> of the primitive. As a positivist who does not acknowledge any other norm but adaptation, he sardonically raises, in one of the most advanced passages of his work, the question of why one should not also adjust oneself to the givenness of the principles of waste, futility and ferocity which according to his doctrine form the canon of pecuniary decency: "But why are apologies needed? If there prevails a body of popular sentiment in favour of sports, why is not that fact a sufficient legitimation? The protracted discipline of prowess to which the race has been subjected under the predatory and quasi-peacable culture has transmitted to the men of today a temperament that finds gratification in these expressions of ferocity and cunning. So, why not accept these sports as legitimate expressions of a normal and wholesome human nature? What other norm is there that is to be lived up to than that given the aggregate range of propensities that express themselves in the sentiments of this generation, including the hereditary strain of prowess?"<sup>31</sup> Here Veblen's reasoning brings him close to the danger of capitulating before the mere existent, before "normal barbarism." His solution is surprising: "The ulterior norm to which appeal is taken is the instinct of workmanship, which is an instinct more fundamental, of more ancient prescription, than the propensity to predatory emulation."<sup>32</sup> This is the key to his theory of the primitive age. The positivist permits himself to think the potentiality of man only by conjuring it into a given; in other words, conjuring it into the past. He allows no other justification of non-predatory life than that it is supposed to be even more given, more positive, more existent than the hell of existence. The golden age is the positivist's *asylum ignorantiae*. He introduces the instinct of workmanship incidentally, as it were, in order finally to bring paradise and the industrial age to their common antiropological denominator.

It was in theories of this kind, with their impotent auxiliary constructions in which the idea of Novelty tried to make its peace with adjustment to the ever equal, that Veblen exposed himself most dangerously to criticism. It is easy to call a positivist a fool when he tries to break out of the circle of the matter of fact. Veblen's whole work is actually affected by spleen. It is one big parody on the sense of proportion required by the positivist rules of the game. He is insatiable in his broad analogies between the habits and institu-

<sup>30</sup>Veblen's intimate knowledge of Rousseau is corroborated. Cf. Dorfman, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>31</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 270.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

tions of sport and of religion or between the aggressive canon of honor of the gentleman and the criminal. He cannot even refrain from economic complaints about the waste of ceremonial paraphernalia in the religious cults. He is pretty close to the reformers of life. Often enough his utopia of the primitive deteriorates into a cheaper belief in the "natural" and he preaches against the follies of fashion, long skirts and corsets—for the most part attributes of the nineteenth century swept away by the progress of the twentieth without bringing the barbarism of culture to an end. In Veblen conspicuous consumption plays the role of a fixed idea. To understand the contradiction between it and Veblen's keen social analyses one must take account of the cognitive function of spleen. Like the image of a peacable primitive age, the spleen in Veblen—and in other writers as well—is a symptom of too early a slackening of the effort of knowledge. The observer who permits his spleen to guide him attempts to make the overwhelming machinery of society commensurable with human experience. The opaque quality and strangeness of life under monopoly are, as it were, to be grasped with sensory organs, and yet this selfsame strangeness is what escapes immediate experience.<sup>33</sup> The fixed idea replaces the general concept by petrifying and spitefully maintaining a specific and limited experience. The spleen expresses a desire to overcome the inadequacy of any kind of theory in face of universal suffering. Suffering, however, is intrinsic to society as a system and can therefore be adequately identified by theory only and not by the flashlight thrown upon symptoms. As paradoxical as this situation is the endeavor to break through it by means of the spleen. The spleen drafts schemes, so to speak, of a colloquy with the ununderstandable by accusing society in terms of its surface phenomena. Spleen pays for the commensurability of its knowledge with life experience by the manifest insufficiency of knowledge itself. In this the splenetic attitude comes close to that of the backwoods sectarian who ascribes world ruin to a conspiracy of mysterious powers. The splenetic attitude differs, however, from this way of thinking because it confesses to the absurdity of its own whims. When Veblen places the responsibility which actually lies with the economic structure of society on a surface phenomenon, barbarian expenditure, the disproportionality between this thesis and reality becomes an instrument of truth. It aims at a shock. Spleen accompanies itself with impish laughter because its actual object slips through its fingers. Veblen's spleen

<sup>33</sup>One may well seek here the origin of one of Veblen's main polemical concepts, that of absentee ownership. His struggle against the credit function is essentially a protest against the self-alienation of men.

originates in his disgust with official optimism, with the sort of "progressiveness" with which he himself sides as soon as he speaks with common sense.

Melancholy lurks behind his kind of critique, the attitude of disillusionment and "debunking." It follows a traditional pattern popular in the Enlightenment that religion is a "hoax of the clergy." "It is felt that the divinity must be of a peculiarly serene and leisurely habit of life. And whenever his local habitation is pictured in poetic imagery, for edification or in appeal to the devout fancy, the devout word-painter, as a matter of course, brings out before his auditors' imagination a throne with a profusion of the insignia of opulence and power, and surrounded by a great number of servitors. In the common run of such presentations of the celestial abodes, the office of this corps of servants is a vicarious leisure, their time and efforts being in great measure taken up with an industrially unproductive rehearsal of the meritorious characteristics and exploits of the divinity."<sup>34</sup> The way the angels are blamed here for the unproductivity of their labor has a touch of rationalized swearing in it and is just as innocuous. A practical man beats his fist on the table. He does not fall for the dreams and neuroses of society. His triumph is like that of the husband who forces his hysterical wife to do housework in order to cure her of her caprices. The splenetic attitude clings obstinately to the alienated world of things and makes the malicious object responsible for evil. The debunker follows through. He is the "man with the knack" who does not allow himself to be cheated by the malicious objects but tears the ideological coverings from them in order to manipulate them the more easily. He curses the damned swindle. It is not accidental that the debunker's hatred is always directed against intermediary functions. The swindle and the middle-man belong together. So, however, do mediation and thinking. At the bottom of debunking lies a hatred for thinking.<sup>35</sup> Criticism of barbarian culture cannot be content with a barbaric denunciation of culture. It has to recognize the open, culture-less barbarism and reject it as the intrinsic goal of that culture rather than sullenly proclaim the supremacy of this barbarism

<sup>34</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 124f.

<sup>35</sup>Veblen's consciousness was quite free from this hatred. To be sure, anti-intellectualism was objectively implied in his struggle against social intermediary functions as well as in his denunciation of "higher learning." The narrow-mindedness of Veblen's theory possibly can be accounted for by his neglecting the problem of mediation. In his physiognomy the zealotry of Scandinavian Protestantism which does not tolerate any intermediary between God and inwardness trains itself to serve the purposes of a society which liquidates the intermediary functions between the omnipotent production and the forced consumer. In a famous excursus in *Absentee Ownership*, Veblen compares the clergyman with a salesman. Both attitudes, the radical Protestant one and that of State Capitalism, are strongly anti-intellectual.



over culture merely because it has ceased to deceive. In a false society the victory of sincerity is the victory of horror. This horror can be sensed in the quips of the debunker, as it can in Veblen's gibe that the dwellers of "celestial abodes" are practising industrial unproductivity. Such jokes appeal to the friends of the existent. Laughter at this picture of beatitude is closer to violence than the picture itself, no matter how much the latter may be bloated by power and glory.

Yet Veblen's insistence upon the world of facts, his all-pervasive iconoclasm, stems from an impulse which can not be overestimated. One might say that all the forces of rebellion against barbaric life have migrated with him into the pressure of adjustment to the exigencies of that life. The pragmatist of his type is really free of illusions. For him there is no "whole": no identity between thinking and being, not even the concept of such an identity. Again and again he comes back to the position that the "habits of thought" and the demands of the concrete situation are irreconcilable. "Institutions are products of the past process, are adapted to past circumstances, and are therefore never in full accord with the requirements of the present. In the nature of the case, this process of selective adaptation can never catch up with the progressively changing situation in which the community finds itself at any given time; for the environment, the situation, the exigencies of life which enforce the adaptation and exercise the selection, change from day to day; and each successive situation of the community in its turn tends to obsolescence as soon as it has been established. When a step in the development has been taken, this step itself constitutes a change of situation which requires a new adaptation; it becomes the point of departure for a new step in the adjustment, and so on interminably."<sup>36</sup> This irreconcilability excludes the abstract ideal or makes it appear a childish phrase. Truth is reduced to the next step, the closest, not the farthest one. The pragmatist can point to the totality as that which is never definitely and finally given. Only the closest can be experienced while that which is farthest, the ideal, is blurred by incompleteness and uncertainty. These objections ought not to be overlooked. To contrast dialectical philosophy with pragmatism it is not sufficient to insist upon the total interest of a "good" society against the practical advantage in a bad one. The bad and the good do not have two truths. The truth of any good society of the future depends, as it were, on every step within "pre-history," on each of its moments.

<sup>36</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 191.

Thus the difference between pragmatism and dialectics, like every genuine philosophical difference, consists of a nuance, that is to say, the interpretation of the next step. The type of pragmatism here in question interprets this step as an adaptation. This is at the hub of Veblen's critique of Marx. Mitchell sums up the position as follows: "Just before his time the German historical school had perceived the relativity of orthodox economics; but they had not produced a scientific substitute for the doctrine they belittled or discarded. Karl Marx had been more constructive. In Veblen's view, Marx had made a brave beginning in cultural analysis, though handicapped by a superficial psychology derived from Bentham and by a romantic metaphysics derived from Hegel. Bentham's influence led Marx to develop a commonplace theory of class interests that overlooked the way in which certain habits of thought are drilled into business men by their pecuniary occupations and quite different habits of thought are drilled into wage earners by the machine process in which they are caught. Hegel's influence made the Marxian theory of social evolution essentially an intellectual sequence that tends to a goal, 'the classless economic structure of the socialistic final term,' whereas the Darwinian scheme of thought envisages a 'blindly cumulative causation, in which there is no trend, no final term, no consummation.' Hence Marx strayed from the narrow trail of scientific analysis appropriate to a mechanistic age and attained an optimistic vision of the future which fulfilled his wish for a socialist revolution. The Darwinian viewpoint, which supplies the needed working programme, will spread among social scientists, not because it is less metaphysical than its predecessors or nearer the truth (whatever that may mean), but because it harmonizes better with the thoughts begotten by daily work in the twentieth century."<sup>37</sup> The thesis that the "Darwinian viewpoint" is not "nearer the truth" than Marx but merely more adequate to working conditions in present day society implies the decisive shortcoming of Veblen's theory. The "harmony" of thinking and reality for which his doctrine of adaptation stands may finally be a harmony with that selfsame oppression which he elsewhere condemns. It is a harmony that is certainly not superior to the discordant views of Marx. The latter did not have a "superficial psychology." He had no psychology at all, and for good theoretical reasons. The world Marx scrutinized is ruled by the law of value, not by men's souls. Today men are still the objects or the functionaries of the societal process. To explain the world by means of the psychology of its

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<sup>37</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. xlvii f.

victims already presupposes an abstraction from the basic and objective mechanisms to which men are subject. The psychology of capitalism for which Veblen stands proceeds as if society were men; as if men were not alienated from themselves and from the whole. By hypostatizing the essentially unfree subjects as the basis of a social theory of the existent, it necessarily contains an element of deception. The doctrine of class interests and class consciousness, however, which Veblen attacks as a rationalistic or hedonistic psychology does not simply refer to the psychology of the proletariat as it is. This psychology might have been visualized by Veblen more adequately than by Marx, with the slight qualification that the very features of the proletariat which Veblen regards as hopeful signs of enlightenment have since<sup>38</sup> obtained a function which Veblen never would have dreamt of. *Per contra*, Marx insists upon the objective interests of the proletariat precipitated out of the objective relationships of the system. That interest is objective notwithstanding the fact that the system is not transparent to the proletariat, that the proletariat's "interest" is by no means automatically given as a psychological motive. For, the lack of awareness on the part of the workers and their unconscious adjustment to prevailing conditions is due to the system itself. Veblen blames Marx for superficiality because Marx, like the classical economists, takes happiness as his starting point. According to Veblen men today are not ruled by the idea of happiness, which is none too close to Veblen himself, but rather by the proper weight of societal and economic institutions. But this is based on a misinterpretation of dialectical philosophy. The latter certainly ought to acknowledge the deformations of consciousness brought to light by Veblen's institutionalism. But it ought to acknowledge them as facts, not accept them as measures of what ought to be. If "certain habits of thought are drilled into the wage earners by the machine process in which they are caught," one does not have to give in to these habits, no matter how practical they might be, but to destroy them because of their objective falsity—because they implicitly contain wrong judgments about the process of society as a whole which cannot be grasped in terms of naive and subservient tool-mindedness. Veblen's critical motive and his reverence for the historically given are irreconcilable.

<sup>38</sup>Mitchell sums up Veblen's psychology of the industrial worker as follows: "They [the masses of factory hands] tend to become sceptical, matter-of-fact, materialistic, unmoral, unpatriotic, undevout, blind to the metaphysical niceties of natural rights." (*Op. cit.*, p. xlvi.) One could not give a more adequate description of the cynical frame of mind of very large sections of the population in present day Germany. It ought to be noted in particular that even the term patriotism has fallen into disfavor with the National Socialist regime.



There is an obvious break in his sociology between his attack on the existent and his avowedly Darwinian detachment.

The concept of adaptation is the *deux ex machina* through which Veblen tries to bridge the gap between what is and what ought to be. But adaptation implies the rule of the ever equal.<sup>39</sup> If dialectics, on its side, were to understand the next step as adaptation, it would be surrendering its very case, the idea of potentiality. But what can the next step be if it is not to be abstract and arbitrary, if it is not to be the brand of those Utopias which the initiators of dialectical philosophy have rejected? Conversely, how can the next step obtain its direction and its aim without one's knowing more than merely what is pre-given?

Varying the Kantian question, one might ask: how is anything novel possible at all? The pointing up of this question defines the seriousness of pragmatism. The pragmatist is conscious of the perennial limits put upon men's attempts to go beyond the existent—limits set to both thought and action. He knows, moreover, that the slightest neglect of these limits, the slightest underestimation of the natural and societal powers-that-be, may lead to impotent phrase and futile behavior, liable to be punished by an all too easy victory on the part of the existent which may be delayed or mitigated by one's patiently taking into consideration the full and inexorable weight of what is given. The seriousness of the pragmatist is a reminder of the sceptical attitude of the physician who refuses to bother about the potentiality of a final abolition of death but prefers to help those who live while he takes the final inevitability of death for granted. Just as the physician speaks often enough as if he were the advocate of death, to the ultimate sovereignty of which he bows, the pragmatist stands for man's kinship with blind nature, as the invariant condition upon which every attempt actually to help those who suffer must be based. What may be doubtful, however, is whether the attitude of the philosopher has really to be that of a diagnostician, whether philosophy is bound to be in harmony with the intrinsic principles of practice as it is. For the practical attitude presupposes a kind of detachment which itself falls within the range of philosophical criticism. To the physician men are cases, and his resignation, no matter how deeply founded in facts it may be, at

<sup>39</sup>Mitchell leaves no doubt that this is actually Veblen's opinion and that the difference between his "Darwinism" and dialectical materialism has to be sought here. "His [Veblen's] evolutionary theory forbids him to anticipate a cataclysm, or to forecast a millenium. What will happen in the inscrutable future is what has been happening since the origin of man." (*Op. cit.*, p. xlv.) The interconnection between the concept of the next step and the belief in the ever equal could not be expressed more strikingly.

least partly reflects, by his very reference to facts, his implicit conviction that this relation of subject and object cannot possibly be altered. His well-beloved admonition to "keep cool" may be necessary if he is to tender effective aid, but the philosophical equivalent of this attitude tends toward the acceptance of mere fate by theoretically reifying once more those who are already treated as objects by reality. The stubborn facts which are accepted by the observer may finally be recognized as man-made bricks in the wall behind which the stubborn society keeps each of its members. Where the pragmatist sees mere "opaque items"<sup>40</sup> which from the point of view of science are simply data to be organized in a logical context, there the task of philosophy only starts. It is the task of calling things by their names,<sup>41</sup> instead of shelving them in logical files, and of conceiving even their very opaqueness as the outcome of the selfsame social process from which they appear utterly detached. The novel may well consist in what is thus being "named." Nothing, however, is more opaque than adaptation itself wherein mere existence is installed as the measure of truth. The pragmatist wants every statement referred to a specific locus in time and space to get the historical index of every truth. But the pragmatist's own idea of adaptation needs such an index. It is what Freud called the life need. The next step is an adapting one only so far as want and poverty rule the world. Adaptation is the behavior adequate to a situation of "not enough" and the shortcoming of pragmatism lies in the fact that it hypostatizes this situation as an eternal one. This is implied in its concepts of nature and life. Thus, Veblen wishes men "identification with the life process,"<sup>42</sup> thereby perpetuating the attitude practised by men in nature when nature does not allow them sufficient means for their existence. Veblen's attacks against the sheltered whose position of privilege exempts them from having to make any adaptation to a changed situation<sup>43</sup> virtually terminates in a glorification of the Darwinian struggle for existence. This selfsame assumption of a life need is today clearly obsolescent, at least as regards the social conditions of life. It is outdated by the very development of technological productive forces to which Veblen's doctrine counsels men to adjust themselves. The pragmatist thus falls victim to dialectics. Whoever wishes to "live up" to the standard of the present technological situation, with its promises of richness and abundance to men which are kept from fulfillment only by the organization of

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<sup>40</sup>Veblen, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. T. W. Adorno, *Kierkegaard, Konstruktion des Ästhetischen*, Tübingen 1933, p. 88.

<sup>42</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 335.

<sup>43</sup>Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 193.

society, has to cease obeying the rules of scarcity culture. In one of the most beautiful passages of his work Veblen has realized the interconnection between poverty and the continuance of existing forms. "The abjectly poor, and all those persons whose energies are entirely absorbed by the struggle for daily sustenance, are conservative because they cannot afford the effort of taking thought for the day after to-morrow; just as the highly prosperous are conservative because they have small occasion to be discontented with the situation as it stands to-day."<sup>44</sup> The pragmatist, however, clings retrogressively to the standpoint of those who cannot think for the day after to-morrow—that is to say, beyond the next step—because they do not know what they will live on to-morrow. He represents poverty. This is his historical truth because the organization of society still maintains men in poverty, and his historical untruth because the absurdity of this poverty finally has become manifest. To adapt oneself to what is possible today no longer means adapting oneself at all. It means realizing the objective potentiality.

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<sup>44</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 204.



## Some Social Implications of Modern Technology

By Herbert Marcuse

In this article, technology is taken as a social process in which technics proper (that is, the technical apparatus of industry, transportation, communication) is but a partial factor. We do not ask for the influence or effect of technology on the human individuals. For they are themselves an integral part and factor of technology, not only as the men who invent or attend to machinery but also as the social groups which direct its application and utilization. Technology, as a mode of production, as the totality of instruments, devices and contrivances which characterize the machine age is thus at the same time a mode of organizing and perpetuating (or changing) social relationships, a manifestation of prevalent thought and behavior patterns, an instrument for control and domination.<sup>1</sup>

Technics by itself can promote authoritarianism as well as liberty, scarcity as well as abundance, the extension as well as the abolition of toil. National Socialism is a striking example of the ways in which a highly rationalized and mechanized economy with the utmost efficiency in production can operate in the interest of totalitarian oppression and continued scarcity. The Third Reich is indeed a form of "technocracy": the technical considerations of imperialistic efficiency and rationality supersede the traditional standards of profitability and general welfare. In National Socialist Germany, the reign of terror is sustained not only by brute force which is foreign to technology but also by the ingenious manipulation of the power inherent in technology: the intensification of labor, propaganda, the training of youths and workers, the organization of the governmental, industrial and party bureaucracy—all of which constitute the daily implements of terror—follow the lines of greatest technological efficiency. This terroristic technocracy cannot be attributed to the exceptional requirements of "war economy"; war economy is rather the normal state of the National Socialist ordering of the social and economic process, and technology is one of the chief stimuli of this ordering.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*, New York 1936, p. 364: The motive in back of "mechanical discipline and many of the primary inventions . . . was not technical efficiency but holiness, or power over other men. In the course of their development machines have extended these aims and provided a vehicle for their fulfillment."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. A.R.L. Gurland, "Technological Trends and Economic Structure under National Socialism," in this journal, IX (1941), No. 2, pp. 226ff.

In the course of the technological process a new rationality and new standards of individuality have spread over society, different from and even opposed to those which initiated the march of technology. These changes are not the (direct or derivative) effect of machinery on its users or of mass production on its consumers; they are rather themselves determining factors in the development of machinery and mass production. In order to understand their full import, it is necessary to survey briefly the traditional rationality and standards of individuality which are being dissolved by the present stage of the machine age.

The human individual whom the exponents of the middle class revolution had made the ultimate unit as well as the end of society stood for values which strikingly contradict those holding sway over society today. If we try to assemble in one guiding concept the various religious, political and economic tendencies which shaped the idea of the individual in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, we may define the individual as the subject of certain fundamental standards and values which no external authority was supposed to encroach upon. These standards and values pertained to the forms of life, social as well as personal, which were most adequate to the full development of man's faculties and abilities. By the same token, they were the "truth" of his individual and social existence. The individual, as a rational being, was deemed capable of finding these forms by his own thinking and, once he had acquired freedom of thought, of pursuing the course of action which would actualize them. Society's task was to grant him such freedom and to remove all restrictions upon his rational course of action.

The principle of individualism, the pursuit of self-interest, was conditioned upon the proposition that self-interest was rational, that is to say, that it resulted from and was constantly guided and controlled by autonomous thinking. The rational self-interest did not coincide with the individual's immediate self-interest, for the latter depended upon the standards and requirements of the prevailing social order, placed there not by his autonomous thought and conscience but by external authorities. In the context of radical Puritanism, the principle of individualism thus set the individual against his society. Men had to break through the whole system of ideas and values imposed upon them, and to find and seize the ideas and values that conformed to their rational interest. They had to live in a state of constant vigilance, apprehension, and criticism, to reject everything that was not true, not justified by free reason. This, in a society which was not yet rational, constituted a principle of per-

manent unrest and opposition. For false standards still governed the life of men, and the free individual was therefore he who criticised these standards, searched for the true ones and advanced their realization. The theme has nowhere been more fittingly expressed than in Milton's image of a "wicked race of deceivers, who . . . took the virgin Truth, hewd her lovely form into a thousand peeces, and scatter'd them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangl'd body of Osiris, went up and down gathering up limb by limb still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, . . . nor ever shall do, till her Master's second coming . . . —To be still searching what we know not, by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it (for all her body is homogeneal and proportionall)," this was the principle of individualistic rationality.<sup>3</sup>

To fulfill this rationality presupposed an adequate social and economic setting, one that would appeal to individuals whose social performance was, at least to a large extent, their own work. Liberalist society was held to be the adequate setting for individualistic rationality. In the sphere of free competition, the tangible achievements of the individual which made his products and performances a part of society's need, were the marks of his individuality. In the course of time, however, the process of commodity production undermined the economic basis on which individualistic rationality was built. Mechanization and rationalization forced the weaker competitor under the dominion of the giant enterprises of machine industry which, in establishing society's dominion over nature, abolished the free economic subject.

The principle of competitive efficiency favors the enterprises with the most highly mechanized and rationalized industrial equipment. Technological power tends to the concentration of economic power, to "large units of production, of vast corporate enterprises producing large quantities and often a striking variety of goods, of industrial empires owning and controlling materials, equipment, and processes from the extraction of raw materials to the distribution of finished products, of dominance over an entire industry by a small number of giant concerns. . . ." And technology "steadily increases the power at the command of giant concerns by creating new tools, processes and products."<sup>4</sup> Efficiency here called for integral unification and simplification, for the removal of all "waste," the avoidance of all

<sup>3</sup>Areopagitica, in *Works*, New York 1931, 4, pp. 338-339.

<sup>4</sup>*Temporary National Committee*, Monograph No. 22, "Technology in Our Economy," Washington, 1941, p. 195.



detours, it called for radical coordination. A contradiction exists, however, between the profit incentive that keeps the apparatus moving and the rise of the standard of living which this same apparatus has made possible. "Since control of production is in the hands of enterprisers working for profit, they will have at their disposal whatever emerges as surplus after rent, interest, labor, and other costs are met. These costs will be kept at the lowest possible minimum as a matter of course."<sup>5</sup> Under these circumstances, profitable employment of the apparatus dictates to a great extent the quantity, form and kind of commodities to be produced, and through this mode of production and distribution, the technological power of the apparatus affects the entire rationality of those whom it serves.

Under the impact of this apparatus,<sup>6</sup> individualistic rationality has been transformed into technological rationality. It is by no means confined to the subjects and objects of large scale enterprises but characterizes the pervasive mode of thought and even the manifold forms of protest and rebellion. This rationality establishes standards of judgment and fosters attitudes which make men ready to accept and even to introcept the dictates of the apparatus.

Lewis Mumford has characterized man in the machine age as an "objective personality," one who has learned to transfer all subjective spontaneity to the machinery which he serves, to subordinate his life to the "matter-of-factness" of a world in which the machine is the factor and he the factum.<sup>7</sup> Individual distinctions in the aptitude, insight and knowledge are transformed into different quanta of skill and training, to be coordinated at any time within the common framework of standardized performances.

Individuality, however, has not disappeared. The free economic subject rather has developed into the object of large-scale organization and coordination, and individual achievement has been transformed into standardized efficiency. The latter is characterized by the fact that the individual's performance is motivated, guided and measured by standards external to him, standards pertaining to pre-determined tasks and functions. The efficient individual is the one whose performance is an action only insofar as it is the proper reaction to the objective requirements of the apparatus, and his liberty is confined to the selection of the most adequate means for reaching a goal which he did not set. Whereas individual achievement is independent of recognition and consummated in the work itself, effi-

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<sup>5</sup>*Temporary National Economic Committee, Final Report of the Executive Secretary, Washington 1941, p. 140.*

<sup>6</sup>The term "apparatus" denotes the institutions, devices and organizations of industry in their prevailing social setting.

<sup>7</sup>L. Mumford, *op. cit.*, pp. 361ff.

ciency is a rewarded performance and consummated only in its value for the apparatus.

With the majority of the population, the former freedom of the economic subject was gradually submerged in the efficiency with which he performed services assigned to him. The world had been rationalized to such an extent, and this rationality had become such a social power that the individual could do no better than adjust himself without reservation. Veblen was among the first to derive the new matter-of-factness from the machine process, from which it spread over the whole society: "The share of the operative workman in the machine industry is (typically) that of an attendant, an assistant, whose duty it is to keep pace with the machine process and to help out with workmanlike manipulation at points where the machine process engaged is incomplete. His work supplements the machine process rather than makes use of it. On the contrary the machine process makes use of the workman. The ideal mechanical contrivance in this technological system is the automatic machine."<sup>8</sup> The machine process requires a knowledge oriented to "a ready apprehension of opaque facts, in passably exact quantitative terms. This class of knowledge presumes a certain intellectual or spiritual attitude on the part of the workman, such an attitude as will readily apprehend and appreciate matter of fact and will guard against the suffusion of this knowledge with putative animistic or anthropomorphic subtleties, quasi-personal interpretations of the observed phenomena and of their relations to one another."<sup>9</sup>

As an attitude, matter-of-factness is not bound to the machine process. Under all forms of social production men have taken and justified their motives and goals from the facts that made up their reality, and in doing so they have arrived at the most diverging philosophies. Matter-of-factness animated ancient materialism and hedonism, it was responsible in the struggle of modern physical science against spiritual oppression, and in the revolutionary rationalism of the enlightenment. The new attitude differs from all these in the highly rational compliance which typifies it. The facts directing man's thought and action are not those of nature which must be accepted in order to be mastered, or those of society which must be changed because they no longer correspond to human needs and potentialities. Rather are they those of the machine process, which itself appears as the embodiment of rationality and expediency.

<sup>8</sup>*The Instinct of Workmanship*, New York 1922, p. 306f.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 310. This training in "matter of factness" applies not only to the factory worker but also to those who direct rather than attend the machine.

Let us take a simple example. A man who travels by automobile to a distant place chooses his route from the highway maps. Towns, lakes and mountains appear as obstacles to be bypassed. The countryside is shaped and organized by the highway: what one finds en route is a byproduct or annex of the highway. Numerous signs and posters tell the traveler what to do and think; they even request his attention to the beauties of nature or the hallmarks of history. Others have done the thinking for him, and perhaps for the better. Convenient parking spaces have been constructed where the broadest and most surprising view is open. Giant advertisements tell him when to stop and find the pause that refreshes. And all this is indeed for his benefit, safety and comfort; he receives what he wants. Business, technics, human needs and nature are welded together into one rational and expedient mechanism. He will fare best who follows its directions, subordinating his spontaneity to the anonymous wisdom which ordered everything for him.

The decisive point is that this attitude—which dissolves all actions into a sequence of semi-spontaneous reactions to prescribed mechanical norms—is not only perfectly rational but also perfectly reasonable. All protest is senseless, and the individual who would insist on his freedom of action would become a crank. There is no personal escape from the apparatus which has mechanized and standardized the world. It is a rational apparatus, combining utmost expediency with utmost convenience, saving time and energy, removing waste, adapting all means to the end, anticipating consequences, sustaining calculability and security.

In manipulating the machine, man learns that obedience to the directions is the only way to obtain desired results. Getting along is identical with adjustment to the apparatus. There is no room for autonomy. Individualistic rationality has developed into efficient compliance with the pre-given continuum of means and ends. The latter absorbs the liberating efforts of thought, and the various functions of reason converge upon the unconditional maintenance of the apparatus. It has been frequently stressed that scientific discoveries and inventions are shelved as soon as they seem to interfere with the requirements of profitable marketing.<sup>10</sup> The necessity

<sup>10</sup>Florian Znaniecki, *The Social Role of the Man of Knowledge*, New York 1940, p. 54f. —Bernard J. Stern, *Society and Medical Progress*, Princeton 1941, Chapter IX, and the same author's contribution to *Technological Trends and National Policy*, U. S. National Resources Committee, Washington 1937.



which is the mother of inventions is to a great extent the necessity of maintaining and expanding the apparatus. Inventions have "their chief use . . . in the service of business, not of industry, and their great further use is in the furtherance, or rather the acceleration, of obligatory social amenities." They are mostly of a competitive nature, and "any technological advantage gained by one competitor forthwith becomes a necessity to all the rest, on pain of defeat," so that one might as well say that, in the monopolistic system, "invention is the mother of necessity."<sup>11</sup>

Everything cooperates to turn human instincts, desires and thoughts into channels that feed the apparatus. Dominant economic and social organizations "do not maintain their power by force . . . They do it by identifying themselves with the faiths and loyalties of the people,"<sup>12</sup> and the people have been trained to identify their faiths and loyalties with them. The relationships among men are increasingly mediated by the machine process. But the mechanical contrivances which facilitate intercourse among individuals also intercept and absorb their libido, thereby diverting it from the all too dangerous realm in which the individual is free of society. The average man hardly cares for any living being with the intensity and persistence he shows for his automobile. The machine that is adored is no longer dead matter but becomes something like a human being. And it gives back to man what it possesses: the life of the social apparatus to which it belongs. Human behavior is outfitted with the rationality of the machine process, and this rationality has a definite social content. The machine process operates according to the laws of physical science, but it likewise operates according to the laws of mass production. Expediency in terms of technological reason is, at the same time, expediency in terms of profitable efficiency, and rationalization is, at the same time, monopolistic standardization and concentration. The more rationally the individual behaves and the more lovingly he attends to his rationalized work, the more he succumbs to the frustrating aspects of this rationality. He is losing his ability to abstract from the special form in which rationalization is carried through and is losing his faith in its unfulfilled potentialities. His matter-of-factness, his distrust of all values which transcend the facts of observation, his resentment against all "quasi-personal" and metaphysical interpretations, his suspicion of all standards which re-

<sup>11</sup>Thorstein Veblen, *op. cit.*, p. 315f.

<sup>12</sup>Thurman Arnold, *The Folklore of Capitalism*, New York 1941, p. 193f.

late the observable order of things, the rationality of the apparatus, to the rationality of freedom,—this whole attitude serves all too well those who are interested in perpetuating the prevailing form of matters of fact. The machine process requires a “consistent training in the mechanical apprehension of things,” and this training, in turn, promotes “conformity to the schedule of living,” a “degree of trained insight and a facile strategy in all manner of quantitative adjustments and adaptations . . .”<sup>13</sup> The “mechanics of conformity” spread from the technological to the social order; they govern performance not only in the factories and shops, but also in the offices, schools, assemblies and, finally, in the realm of relaxation and entertainment.

Individuals are stripped of their individuality, not by external compulsion, but by the very rationality under which they live. Industrial psychology correctly assumes that “the dispositions of men are fixed emotional habits and as such they are quite dependable reaction patterns.”<sup>14</sup> True, the force which transforms human performance into a series of dependable reactions is an external force: the machine process imposes upon men the patterns of mechanical behavior, and the standards of competitive efficiency are the more enforced from outside the less independent the individual competitor becomes. But man does not experience this loss of his freedom as the work of some hostile and foreign force; he relinquishes his liberty to the dictum of reason itself. The point is that today the apparatus to which the individual is to adjust and adapt himself is so rational that individual protest and liberation appear not only as hopeless but as utterly irrational. The system of life created by modern industry is one of the highest expediency, convenience and efficiency. Reason, once defined in these terms, becomes equivalent to an activity which perpetuates this world. Rational behavior becomes identical with a matter-of-factness which teaches reasonable submissiveness and thus guarantees getting along in the prevailing order.

At first glance, the technological attitude rather seems to imply the opposite of resignation. Teleological and theological dogmas no longer interfere with man’s struggle with matter; he develops his experimental energies without inhibition. There is no constellation of matter which he does not try to break up, to manipulate and to change according to his will and interest. This experimentalism, however, frequently serves the effort to develop a higher efficiency of hierarchical control over men. Technological rationality may

<sup>13</sup>Thorstein Veblen, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

<sup>14</sup>Albert Walton, *Fundamentals of Industrial Psychology*, New York 1941, p. 24.

easily be placed into the service of such control: in the form of "scientific management," it has become one of the most profitable means for streamlined autocracy. F. W. Taylor's exposition of Scientific Management shows within it the union of exact science, matter-of-factness and big industry: "Scientific management attempts to substitute, in the relation between employers and workers, the government of fact and law for the rule of force and opinion. It substitutes exact knowledge for guesswork, and seeks to establish a code of natural laws equally binding upon employers and workmen. Scientific management thus seeks to substitute in the shop discipline, natural law in place of a code of discipline based upon the caprice and arbitrary power of men. No such democracy has ever existed in industry before. Every protest of every workman must be handled by those on the management side and the right and wrong of the complaint must be settled, not by the opinion either of the management or the workman but by the great code of laws which has been developed and which must satisfy both sides."<sup>15</sup> The scientific effort aims at eliminating waste, intensifying production and standardizing the product. And this whole scheme to increase profitable efficiency poses as the final fulfillment of individualism, ending up with a demand to "develop the individuality of the workers."<sup>16</sup>

The idea of compliant efficiency perfectly illustrates the structure of technological rationality. Rationality is being transformed from a critical force into one of adjustment and compliance. Autonomy of reason loses its meaning in the same measure as the thoughts, feelings and actions of men are shaped by the technical requirements of the apparatus which they have themselves created. Reason has found its resting place in the system of standardized control, production and consumption. There it reigns through the laws and mechanisms which insure the efficiency, expediency and coherence of this system.

As the laws and mechanisms of technological rationality spread over the whole society, they develop a set of truth values of their own which hold good for the functioning of the apparatus—and for that alone. Propositions concerning competitive or collusive behavior, business methods, principles of effective organization and control, fair play, the use of science and technics are true or false in terms of this value system, that is to say, in terms of instrumentalities that dictate their own ends. These truth values are tested and perpetuated by experience and must guide the thoughts and actions

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<sup>15</sup>Robert F. Hoxie, *Scientific Management and Labor*, New York 1916, p. 140f.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 149.



of all who wish to survive. Rationality here calls for unconditional compliance and coordination, and consequently, the truth values related to this rationality imply the subordination of thought to pregiven external standards. We may call this set of truth values the technological truth, technological in the twofold sense that it is an instrument of expediency rather than an end in itself, and that it follows the pattern of technological behavior.

By virtue of its subordination to external standards, the technological truth comes into striking contradiction with the form in which individualistic society had established its supreme values. The pursuit of self-interest now appears to be conditioned upon heteronomy, and autonomy as an obstacle rather than stimulus for rational action. The originally identical and "homogenous" truth seems to be split into two different sets of truth values and two different patterns of behavior: the one assimilated to the apparatus, the other antagonistic to it; the one making up the prevailing technological rationality and governing the behavior required by it, the other pertaining to a critical rationality whose values can be fulfilled only if it has itself shaped all personal and social relationships. The critical rationality derives from the principles of autonomy which individualistic society itself had declared to be its self-evident truths. Measuring these principles against the form in which individualistic society has actualized them, critical rationality accuses social injustice in the name of individualistic society's own ideology.<sup>17</sup> The relationship between technological and critical truth is a difficult problem which cannot be dealt with here, but two points must be mentioned. (1) The two sets of truth values are neither wholly contradictory nor complementary to each other; many truths of technological rationality are preserved or transformed in critical rationality. (2) The distinction between the two sets is not rigid; the content of each set changes in the social process so that what were once critical truth values become technological values. For example, the proposition that every individual is equipped with certain inalienable rights is a critical proposition but it was frequently interpreted in favor of efficiency and concentration of power."<sup>18</sup>

The standardization of thought under the sway of technological rationality also affects the critical truth values. The latter are torn from the context to which they originally belonged and, in their new form, are given wide, even official publicity. For example, proposi-

<sup>17</sup>Cf. Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse, "Traditionelle und kritische Theorie," in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, VI (1937), pp. 245ff.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. the discussion on the law Le Chapelier in the National Assembly of the French Revolution.

tions which, in Europe, were the exclusive domain of the labor movement are today adopted by the very forces which these propositions denounced. In the Fascist countries, they serve as ideological instruments for the attack on "Jewish capitalism" and "Western plutocracy," thereby concealing the actual front in the struggle. The materialistic analysis of present day economy is employed to justify Fascism to the German industrialists in whose interest it operates, as the regime of last resort for imperialistic expansion.<sup>19</sup> In other countries, the critique of political economy functions in the struggle among conflicting business groups and as governmental weapon for unmasking monopolistic practices; it is propagated by the columnists of the big press syndicates and finds its way even into the popular magazines and the addresses to manufacturers associations. As these propositions become part and parcel of the established culture, however, they seem to lose their edge and to merge with the old and the familiar. This familiarity with the truth illuminates the extent to which society has become indifferent and insusceptible to the impact of critical thought. For the categories of critical thought preserve their truth value only if they direct the full realization of the social potentialities which they envision, and they lose their vigor if they determine an attitude of fatalistic compliance or competitive assimilation.

Several influences have conspired to bring about the social impotence of critical thought. The foremost among them is the growth of the industrial apparatus and of its all-embracing control over all spheres of life. The technological rationality inculcated in those who attend to this apparatus has transformed numerous modes of external compulsion and authority into modes of self-discipline and self-control. Safety and order are, to a large extent, guaranteed by the fact that man has learned to adjust his behavior to the other fellow's down to the most minute detail. All men act equally rationally, that is to say, according to the standards which insure the functioning of the apparatus and thereby the maintenance of their own life. But this "introversion" of compulsion and authority has strengthened rather than attenuated the mechanisms of social control. Men, in following their own reason, follow those who put their reason to profitable use. In Europe, these mechanisms helped to prevent the individual from acting in accordance with the conspicuous truth, and they were efficiently supplemented by the physical control mechanisms of the apparatus. At this point, the otherwise

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<sup>19</sup>Hitler's speech before the Industry Club in Düsseldorf, January 27, 1932, in *My New Order*, New York 1941, pp. 93ff.

diverging interests and their agencies are synchronized and adjusted in such a manner that they efficiently counteract any serious threat to their dominion.

The ever growing strength of the apparatus, however, is not the only influence responsible. The social impotence of critical thought has been further facilitated by the fact that important strata of the opposition have for long been incorporated into the apparatus itself—without losing the title of the opposition. The history of this process is well known and is illustrated in the development of the labor movement. Shortly after the first World War, Veblen declared that “the A.F. of L. is itself one of the Vested Interests, as ready as any other to do battle for its own margin of privilege and profit. . . . The A.F. of L. is a business organization with a vested interest of its own; for keeping up prices and keeping down the supply, quite after the usual fashion of management by the other Vested Interests.”<sup>20</sup> The same holds true for the labor bureaucracy in leading European countries. The question here pertains not to the political expediency and the consequences of such a development, but to the changing function of the truth values which labor had represented and carried forward.

These truth values belonged, to a large extent, to the critical rationality which interpreted the social process in terms of its restrained potentialities. Such a rationality can fully develop only in social groups whose organization is not patterned on the apparatus in its prevailing forms or on its agencies and institutions. For the latter are pervaded by the technological rationality which shapes the attitude and interests of those dependent on them, so that all transcending aims and values are cut off. A harmony prevails between the “spirit” and its material embodiment such that the spirit cannot be supplanted without disrupting the functioning of the whole. The critical truth values borne by an oppositional social movement change their significance when this movement incorporates itself into the apparatus. Ideas such as liberty, productive industry, planned economy, satisfaction of needs are then fused with the interests of control and competition. Tangible organizational success thus outweighs the exigencies of critical rationality.

Its tendency to assimilate itself to the organizational and psychological pattern of the apparatus caused a change in the very

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<sup>20</sup>*The Engineers and The Price System*, New York 1940, pp. 88ff.



structure of the social opposition in Europe. The critical rationality of its aims was subordinated to the technological rationality of its organization and thereby "purged" of the elements which transcended the established pattern of thought and action. This process was the apparently inevitable result of the growth of large scale industry and of its army of dependents. The latter could hope effectively to assert their interests only if these were effectively coordinated in large scale organizations. The oppositional groups were being transformed into mass parties, and their leadership into mass bureaucracies. This transformation, however, far from dissolving the structure of individualistic society into a new system, sustained and strengthened its basic tendencies.

It seems to be self-evident that mass and individual are contradictory concepts and incompatible facts. The crowd "is, to be sure, composed of individuals—but of individuals who cease to be isolated, who cease thinking. The isolated individual within the crowd cannot help thinking, criticizing the emotions. The others, on the other hand, cease to think: they are moved, they are carried away, they are elated; they feel united with their fellow members in the crowd, released from all inhibitions; they are changed and feel no connection with their former state of mind."<sup>21</sup> This analysis, although it correctly describes certain features of the masses, contains one wrong assumption, that in the crowd the individuals "cease to be isolated," are changed and "feel no connection with their former state of mind." Under authoritarianism, the function of the masses rather consists in consummating the isolation of the individual and in realizing his "former state of mind." The crowd is an association of individuals who have been stripped of all "natural" and personal distinctions and reduced to the standardized expression of their abstract individuality, namely, the pursuit of self-interest. As member of a crowd, man has become the standardized subject of brute self-preservation. In the crowd, the restraint placed by society upon the competitive pursuit of self-interest tends to become ineffective and the aggressive impulses are easily released. These impulses have been developed under the exigencies of scarcity and frustration, and their release rather accentuates the "former state of mind." True, the crowd "unites," but it unites the atomic subjects of self-preservation who are detached from everything that transcends their selfish interests and impulses. The crowd is thus the antithesis of the "community," and the perverted realization of individuality.

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<sup>21</sup>E. Lederer, *State of the Masses*, New York 1940, p. 32f.

The weight and import of the masses grow with the growth of rationalization, but at the same time they are transformed into a conservative force which itself perpetuates the existence of the apparatus. As there is a decrease in the number of those who have the freedom of individual performance, there is an increase in the number of those whose individuality is reduced to self-preservation by standardization. They can pursue their self-interest only by developing "dependable reaction patterns" and by performing pre-arranged functions. Even the highly differentiated professional requirements of modern industry promote standardization. Vocational training is chiefly training in various kinds of skill, psychological and physiological adaptation to a "job" which has to be done. The job, a pre-given "type of work . . . requires a particular combination of abilities,"<sup>22</sup> and those who create the job also shape the human material to fill it. The abilities developed by such training make the "personality" a means for attaining ends which perpetuate man's existence as an instrumentality, replaceable at short notice by other instrumentalities of the same brand. The psychological and "personal" aspects of vocational training are the more emphasized the more they are subjected to regimentation and the less they are left to free and complete development. The "human side" of the employee and the concern for his personal aptitudes and habits play an important part in the total mobilization of the private sphere for mass production and mass culture. Psychology and individualization serve to consolidate stereotyped dependability, for they give the human object the feeling that he unfolds himself by discharging functions which dissolve his self into a series of required actions and responses. Within this range, individuality is not only preserved but also fostered and rewarded, but such individuality is only the special form in which a man introcepts and discharges, within a general pattern, certain duties allocated to him. Specialization fixates the prevailing scheme of standardization. Almost everyone has become a potential member of the crowd, and the masses belong to the daily implements of the social process. As such, they can easily be handled, for the thoughts, feelings and interests of their members have been assimilated to the pattern of the apparatus. To be sure, their outbursts are terrifying and violent but these are readily directed against the weaker competitors and the conspicuous "outsiders" (Jews, foreigners, national minorities). The coordinated masses do not crave a new order but a larger share in the prevailing one. Through their action, they strive to rectify, in an

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<sup>22</sup>Albert Walton, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

anarchic way, the injustice of competition. Their uniformity is in the competitive self-interest they all manifest, in the equalized expressions of self-preservation. The members of the masses are individuals.

The individual in the crowd is certainly not the one whom the individualist principle exhorted to develop his self, nor is his self-interest the same as the rational interest urged by this principle. Where the daily social performance of the individual has become antagonistic to his "true interest," the individualist principle has changed its meaning. The protagonists of individualism were aware of the fact that "individuals can be developed only by being trusted with somewhat more than they can, at the moment, do well";<sup>23</sup> today, the individual is trusted with precisely what he can, at the moment, do well. The philosophy of individualism has seen the "essential freedom" of the self to be "that it stands for a fateful moment outside of all belongings, and determines for itself alone whether its primary attachments shall be with actual earthly interests or with those of an ideal and potential 'Kingdom of God.'"<sup>24</sup> This ideal and potential kingdom has been defined in different ways, but it has always been characterized by contents which were opposed and transcendent to the prevailing kingdom. Today, the prevailing type of individual is no longer capable of seizing the fateful moment which constitutes his freedom. He has changed his function; from a unit of resistance and autonomy, he has passed to one of ductility and adjustment. It is this function which associates individuals in masses.

The emergence of the modern masses, far from endangering the efficiency and coherence of the apparatus, has facilitated the progressing coordination of society and the growth of authoritarian bureaucracy, thus refuting the social theory of individualism at a decisive point. The technological process seemed to tend to the conquest of scarcity and thus to the slow transformation of competition into cooperation. The philosophy of individualism viewed this process as the gradual differentiation and liberation of human potentialities, as the abolition of the "crowd." Even in the Marxian conception, the masses are not the spearhead of freedom. The Marxian proletariat is not a crowd but a class, defined by its determinate position in the productive process, the maturity of its "consciousness," and the rationality of its common interest. Critical rationality,

<sup>23</sup>W. E. Hocking, *The Lasting Elements of Individualism*, New Haven 1937, p. 5.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 23.



in the most accentuated form, is the prerequisite for its liberating function. In one aspect at least, this conception is in line with the philosophy of individualism: it envisions the rational form of human association as brought about and sustained by the autonomous decision and action of free men.

This is the one point at which the technological and the critical rationality seem to converge, for the technological process implies a democratization of functions. The system of production and distribution has been rationalized to such an extent that the hierarchical distinction between executive and subordinate performances is to an ever smaller degree based upon essential distinctions in aptitude and insight, and to an ever greater degree upon inherited power and a vocational training to which everyone could be subjected. Even experts and "engineers" are no exception. To be sure, the gap between the underlying population and those who design the blueprints for rationalization, who lay out production, who make the inventions and discoveries which accelerate technological progress, becomes daily more conspicuous, particularly in a period of war economy. At the same time, however, this gap is maintained more by the division of power than by the division of work. The hierarchical distinction of the experts and engineers results from the fact that their ability and knowledge is utilized in the interest of autocratic power. The "technological leader" is also a "social leader"; his "social leadership overshadows and conditions his function as a scientist, for it gives him institutional power within the group . . .," and the "captain of industry" acts in "perfect accordance with the traditional dependence of the expert's function."<sup>25</sup> Were it not for this fact, the task of the expert and engineer would not be an obstacle to the general democratization of functions. Technological rationalization has created a common framework of experience for the various professions and occupations. This experience excludes or restrains those elements that transcend the technical control over matters of fact and thus extends the scope of rationalization from the objective to the subjective world. Underneath the complicated web of stratified control is an array of more or less standardized techniques, tending to one general pattern, which insure the material reproduction of society. The "persons engaged in a practical occupation" seem to be convinced that "any situation which appears in the performance of their role can be fitted into some general pattern with which the best, if not all,

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<sup>25</sup>Florian Znaniecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 55.

of them are familiar.”<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the instrumentalistic conception of technological rationality is spreading over almost the whole realm of thought and gives the various intellectual activities a common denominator. They too become a kind of technique,<sup>27</sup> a matter of training rather than individuality, requiring the expert rather than the complete human personality.

The standardization of production and consumption, the mechanization of labor, the improved facilities of transportation and communication, the extension of training, the general dissemination of knowledge—all these factors seem to facilitate the exchangeability of functions. It is as if the basis were shrinking on which the pervasive distinction between “specialized (technical)” and “common” knowledge<sup>28</sup> has been built, and as if the authoritarian control of functions would prove increasingly foreign to the technological process. The special form, however, in which the technological process is organized, counteracts this trend. The same development that created the modern masses as the standardized attendants and dependents of large scale industry also created the hierarchical organization of private bureaucracies. Max Weber has already stressed the connection between mass-democracy and bureaucracy: “In contrast to the democratic self-administration of small homogeneous units,” the bureaucracy is “the universal concomitant of modern mass democracy.”<sup>29</sup>

The bureaucracy becomes the concomitant of the modern masses by virtue of the fact that standardization proceeds along the lines of specialization. The latter by itself, provided that it is not arrested at the point where it interferes with the domain of vested control, is quite compatible with the democratization of functions. Fixated specialization, however, tends to atomize the masses and to insulate the subordinate from the executive functions. We have mentioned that specialized vocational training implies fitting a man to a particular job or a particular line of jobs, thus directing his “personality,” spontaneity and experience to the special situations he may meet in filling the job. In this manner, the various professions and occupations, notwithstanding their convergence upon one general pattern, tend to become atomic units which require coordination and management from above. The technical democratization of func-

<sup>26</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 31—Znaniecki's description refers to a historical state of affairs in which “no demand for a scientist can arise,” but it appears to refer to a basic tendency of the prevailing state of affairs.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Max Horkheimer, “The End of Reason,” p. 380 above.

<sup>28</sup>Florian Znaniecki, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>29</sup>*Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Tübingen 1922, p. 666.

tions is counteracted by their atomization, and the bureaucracy appears as the agency which guarantees their rational course and order.

The bureaucracy thus emerges on an apparently objective and impersonal ground, provided by the rational specialization of functions, and this rationality in turn serves to increase the rationality of submission. For, the more the individual functions are divided, fixated and synchronized according to objective and impersonal patterns, the less reasonable is it for the individual to withdraw or withstand. "The material fate of the masses becomes increasingly dependent upon the continuous and correct functioning of the increasingly bureaucratic order of private capitalistic organizations."<sup>30</sup> The objective and impersonal character of technological rationality bestows upon the bureaucratic groups the universal dignity of reason. The rationality embodied in the giant enterprises makes it appear as if men, in obeying them, obey the dictum of an objective rationality. The private bureaucracy fosters a delusive harmony between the special and the common interest. Private power relationships appear not only as relationships between objective things but also as the rule of rationality itself.

In the Fascist countries, this mechanism facilitated the merger between private, semi-private (party) and public (governmental) bureaucracies. The efficient realization of the interests of large scale enterprise was one of the strongest motives for the transformation of economic into totalitarian political control, and efficiency is one of the main reasons for the Fascist regime's hold over its regimented population. At the same time, however, it is also the force which may break this hold. Fascism can maintain its rule only by aggravating the restraint which it is compelled to impose upon society. It will ever more conspicuously manifest its inability to develop the productive forces, and it will fall before that power which proves to be more efficient than Fascism.

In the democratic countries, the growth of the private bureaucracy can be balanced by the strengthening of the public bureaucracy. The rationality inherent in the specialization of functions tends to enlarge the scope and weight of bureaucratization. In the private bureaucracy, however, such an expansion will intensify rather than alleviate the irrational elements of the social process, for it will widen the discrepancy between the technical character of the division of functions and the autocratic character of control over

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<sup>30</sup>Max Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 669.



them. In contrast, the public bureaucracy, if democratically constituted and controlled, will overcome this discrepancy to the extent that it undertakes the "conservation of those human and material resources which technology and corporations have tended to misuse and waste."<sup>31</sup> In the age of mass society, the power of the public bureaucracy can be the weapon which protects the people from the encroachment of special interests upon the general welfare. As long as the will of the people can effectively assert itself, the public bureaucracy can be a lever of democratization. Large scale industry tends to organize on a national scale, and Fascism has transformed economic expansion into the military conquest of whole continents. In this situation, the restoration of society to its own right, and the maintenance of individual freedom have become directly political questions, their solution depending upon the outcome of the international struggle.

The social character of bureaucratization is largely determined by the extent to which it allows for a democratization of functions that tends to close the gap between the governing bureaucracy and the governed population. If everyone has become a potential member of the public bureaucracy (as he has become a potential member of the masses), society will have passed from the stage of hierarchical bureaucratization to the stage of technical self-administration. Insofar as technocracy implies a deepening of the gap between specialized and common knowledge, between the controlling and coordinating experts and the controlled and coordinated people, the technocratic abolition of the "price system" would stabilize rather than shatter the forces which stand in the way of progress. The same holds true for the so-called managerial revolution. According to the theory of the managerial revolution,<sup>32</sup> the growth of the apparatus entails the rise of a new social class, the "managers," to take over social domination and to establish a new economic and political order. Nobody will deny the increasing importance of management and the simultaneous shift in the function of control. But these facts do not make the managers a new social class or the spearhead of a revolution. Their "source of income" is the same as that of the already existing classes: they either draw salaries, or, insofar as they possess a share in the capital, are themselves capitalists. Moreover, their specific function in the prevailing division of labor does not warrant the expectation that they are predestined to inaugurate a new and more rational division of labor. This function is either determined by

<sup>31</sup>Henry A. Wallace, *Technology, Corporations, and the General Welfare*, Chapel Hill 1937, p. 56.

<sup>32</sup>J. Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution*, New York 1941, pp. 78ff.

the requirement of profitable utilization of capital, and, in this case, the managers are simply capitalists or deputy-capitalists (comprising the "executives" and the corporation-managers<sup>33</sup>); or it is determined by the material process of production (engineers, technicians, production managers, plant superintendents). In the latter case, the managers would belong to the vast army of the "immediate producers" and share its "class interest," were it not for the fact that, even in this function, they work as deputy-capitalists and thus form a segregated and privileged group between capital and labor. Their power, and the awe which it inspires, are derived not from their actual "technological" performance but from their social position, and this they owe to the prevailing organization of production. "The leading managerial and directorial figures within the inner business sancta . . . are drawn from, or have been absorbed into, the upper layers of wealth and income whose stakes it is their function to defend."<sup>34</sup> To sum up, as a separate social group, the managers are thoroughly tied up with the vested interests, and as performers of necessary productive functions they do not constitute a separate "class" at all.

The spreading hierarchy of large scale enterprise and the precipitation of individuals into masses determine the trends of technological rationality today. What results is the mature form of that individualistic rationality which characterized the free economic subject of the industrial revolution. Individualistic rationality was born as a critical and oppositional attitude that derived freedom of action from the unrestricted liberty of thought and conscience and measured all social standards and relations by the individual's rational self-interest. It grew into the rationality of competition in which the rational interest was superseded by the interest of the market, and individual achievement absorbed by efficiency. It ended with standardized submission to the all-embracing apparatus which it had itself created. This apparatus is the embodiment and resting place of individualistic rationality, but the latter now requires that individuality must go. He is rational who most efficiently accepts and executes what is allocated to him, who entrusts his fate to the large scale enterprises and organizations which administer the apparatus.

Such was the logical outcome of a social process which measured individual performance in terms of competitive efficiency. The

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<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 83f.

<sup>34</sup>Robert A. Brady, "Policies of National Manufacturing Spitzenverbände," in *Political Science Quarterly*, LVI, p. 537.

philosophers of individualism have always had an inkling of this outcome and they expressed their anxiety in many different forms, in the skeptical conformism of Hume, in the idealistic introversion of individual freedom, in the frequent attacks of the Transcendentalists against the rule of money and power. But the social forces were stronger than the philosophic protests, and the philosophic justification of individualism took on more and more of the overtones of resignation. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the idea of the individual became increasingly ambiguous: it combined insistence upon free social performance and competitive efficiency with glorification of smallness, privacy and self-limitation. The rights and liberties of the individual in society were interpreted as the rights and liberties of privacy and withdrawal from society. William James, faithful to the individualistic principle, asserted that, in the "rivalry between real organizable goods," the "world's trial is better than the closest solution," provided that the victorious keep "the vanquished somehow represented."<sup>35</sup> His doubt, however, as to whether this trial is really a fair one seems to motivate his hatred of "bigness and greatness in all their forms,"<sup>36</sup> his declaration that "the smaller and more intimate is the truer,—the man more than the home, the home more than the state or the church."<sup>37</sup> The counterposition of individual and society, originally meant to provide the ground for a militant reformation of society in the interest of the individual, comes to prepare and justify the individual's withdrawal from society. The free and self-reliant "soul," which originally nourished the individual's critique of external authority, now becomes a refuge from external authority. Tocqueville had already defined individualism in terms of acquiescence and peaceful resignation: "a mature and calm feeling, which disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellow-creatures; and to draw apart with his family and his friends; so that, after he has thus formed a little circle of his own, he willingly leaves society at large to itself."<sup>38</sup> Autonomy of the individual came to be regarded as a private rather than a public affair, an element of retreat rather than aggression. All these factors of resignation are comprehended in Benjamin Constant's statement that "our liberty should be composed of the peaceful enjoyment of private independence."<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup>*The Thought and Character of William James*, ed. R. B. Perry, Boston 1935, II, p. 265.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 315.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 383.

<sup>38</sup>*Democracy in America*, transl. H. Reeve, New York 1904, II, p. 584.

<sup>39</sup>Quoted in E. Mims, *The Majority of the People*, New York 1941, p. 152.



The elements of restraint and resignation which became increasingly strong in the individualist philosophy of the nineteenth century elucidate the connection between individualism and scarcity. Individualism is the form liberty assumes in a society wherein the acquisition and utilization of wealth is dependent on competitive toil. Individuality is a distinct possession of "pioneers"; it presupposes the open and empty spaces, the freedom of "hewing out a home" as well as the need to do so. The individual's world is a "world of labor and the march," as Walt Whitman says, one in which the available intellectual and material resources must be conquered and appropriated through incessant struggle with man and nature, and in which human forces are released to distribute and administer scarcity.

In the period of large scale industry, however, the existential conditions making for individuality give way to conditions which render individuality unnecessary. In clearing the ground for the conquest of scarcity, the technological process not only levels individuality but also tends to transcend it where it is concurrent with scarcity. Mechanized mass production is filling the empty spaces in which individuality could assert itself. The cultural standardization points, paradoxically enough, to potential abundance as well as actual poverty. This standardization may indicate the extent to which individual creativeness and originality have been rendered unnecessary. With the decline of the liberalistic era, these qualities were vanishing from the domain of material production and becoming the ever more exclusive property of the highest intellectual activities. Now, they seem to disappear from this sphere too: mass culture is dissolving the traditional forms of art, literature and philosophy together with the "personality" which unfolded itself in producing and consuming them. The striking impoverishment which characterizes the dissolution of these forms may involve a new source of enrichment. They derived their truth from the fact that they represented the potentialities of man and nature which were excluded or distorted in the reality. So far were those potentialities from their actualization in the social consciousness that much cried out for unique expression. But today, *humanitas*, wisdom, beauty, freedom and happiness can no longer be represented as the realm of the "harmonious personality" nor as the remote heaven of art nor as metaphysical systems. The "ideal" has become so concrete and so universal that it grips the life of every human being, and the whole of mankind is drawn into the struggle for its realization. Under the terror that now threatens the world the ideal constricts itself to one single and at the same

time common issue. Faced with Fascist barbarism, everyone knows what freedom means, and everyone is aware of the irrationality in the prevailing rationality.

Modern mass society quantifies the qualitative features of individual labor and standardizes the individualistic elements in the activities of intellectual culture. This process may bring to the fore the tendencies which make individuality a historical form of human existence, to be surpassed by further social development. This does not mean that society is bound to enter a stage of "collectivism." The collectivistic traits which characterize the development today may still belong to the phase of individualism. Masses and mass culture are manifestations of scarcity and frustration, and the authoritarian assertion of the common interest is but another form of the rule of particular interests over the whole. The fallacy of collectivism consists in that it equips the whole (society) with the traditional properties of the individual. Collectivism abolishes the free pursuit of competing individual interests but retains the idea of the common interest as a separate entity. Historically, however, the latter is but the counterpart of the former. Men experience their society as the objective embodiment of the collectivity as long as the individual interests are antagonistic to and competing with each other for a share in the social wealth. To such individuals, society appears as an objective entity, consisting of numerous things, institutions and agencies: plants and shops, business, police and law, government, schools and churches, prisons and hospitals, theaters and organizations, etc. Society is almost everything the individual is not, everything that determines his habits, thoughts and behavior patterns, that affects him from "outside." Accordingly, society is noticed chiefly as a power of restraint and control, providing the framework which integrates the goals, faculties and aspirations of men. It is this power which collectivism retains in its picture of society, thus perpetuating the rule of things and men over men.

The technological process itself furnishes no justification for such a collectivism. Technics hampers individual development only insofar as they are tied to a social apparatus which perpetuates scarcity, and this same apparatus has released forces which may shatter the special historical form in which technics is utilized. For this reason, all programs of an anti-technological character, all propaganda for an anti-industrial revolution<sup>40</sup> serve only those who regard human

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<sup>40</sup>See for example Oswald Spengler, *Man and Technics*, New York 1932, p. 96f., and Roy Helton, "The Anti-Industrial Revolution," in *Harpers*, December 1941, pp. 65ff.

needs as a by-product of the utilization of technics. The enemies of technics readily join forces with a terroristic technocracy.<sup>41</sup> The philosophy of the simple life, the struggle against big cities and their culture frequently serves to teach men distrust of the potential instruments that could liberate them. We have pointed to the possible democratization of functions which technics may promote and which may facilitate complete human development in all branches of work and administration. Moreover, mechanization and standardization may one day help to shift the center of gravity from the necessities of material production to the arena of free human realization. The less individuality is required to assert itself in standardized social performances, the more it could retreat to a free "natural" ground. These tendencies, far from engendering collectivism, may lead to new forms of individualization. The machine individualizes men by following the physiological lines of individuality: it allocates the work to finger, hand, arm, foot, classifying and occupying men according to the dexterity of these organs.<sup>42</sup> The external mechanisms which govern standardization here meet a "natural" individuality; they lay bare the ground on which a hitherto suppressed individualization might develop. On this ground, man is an individual by virtue of the uniqueness of his body and its unique position in the space-time continuum. He is an individual insofar as this natural uniqueness molds his thoughts, instincts, emotions, passions and desires. This is the "natural" *principium individuationis*. Under the system of scarcity, men developed their senses and organs chiefly as implements of labor and competitive orientation: skill, taste, proficiency, tact, refinement and endurance were qualities molded and perpetuated by the hard struggle for life, business and power. Consequently, man's thoughts, appetites and the ways of their fulfillment were not "his," they showed the oppressive and inhibitive features which this struggle imposed upon him. His senses, organs and appetites became acquisitive, exclusive and antagonistic. The technological process has reduced the variety of individual qualities down to this natural basis of individualization, but this same basis may become the foundation for a new form of human development.

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<sup>41</sup>In National Socialist Germany, the ideology of blood and soil and the glorification of the peasant is an integral part of the imperialistic mobilization of industry and labor.

<sup>42</sup>For examples of the degree to which this physiological individualization has been utilized see *Changes in Machinery and Job Requirements in Minnesota Manufacturing 1931-36*, Works Projects Administration, National Research Project, Report No. 1-6. Philadelphia, p. 19.



The philosophy of individualism established an intrinsic connection between individuality and property.<sup>43</sup> According to this philosophy, man could not develop a self without conquering and cultivating a domain of his own, to be shaped exclusively by his free will and reason. The domain thus conquered and cultivated had become part and parcel of his own "nature." Man removed the objects in this domain from the state in which he found them, and made them the tangible manifestation of his individual labor and interest. They were his property because they were fused with the very essence of his personality. This construction did not correspond to the facts and lost its meaning in the era of mechanized commodity production, but it contained the truth that individual development, far from being an inner value only, required an external sphere of manifestation and an autonomous concern for men and things. The process of production has long dissolved the link between individual labor and property and now tends to dissolve the link between the traditional form of property and social control, but the tightening of this control counteracts a tendency which may give the individualistic theory a new content. Technological progress would make it possible to decrease the time and energy spent in the production of the necessities of life, and a gradual reduction of scarcity and abolition of competitive pursuits could permit the self to develop from its natural roots. The less time and energy man has to expend in maintaining his life and that of society, the greater the possibility that he can "individualize" the sphere of his human realization. Beyond the realm of necessity, the essential differences between men could unfold themselves: everyone could think and act by himself, speak his own language, have his own emotions and follow his own passions. No longer chained to competitive efficiency, the self could grow in the realm of satisfaction. Man could come into his own in his passions. The objects of his desires would be the less exchangeable the more they were seized and shaped by his free self. They would "belong" to him more than ever before, and such ownership would not be injurious, for it would not have to defend its own against a hostile society.

Such a Utopia would not be a state of perennial happiness. The "natural" individuality of man is also the source of his natural sorrow. If the human relations are nothing but human, if they are freed from all foreign standards, they will be permeated with the sadness of their singular content. They are transitory and irre-

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<sup>43</sup>See Max Horkheimer, "The End of Reason," p. 377 above.

placeable, and their transitory character will be accentuated when concern for the human being is no longer mingled with fear for his material existence and overshadowed by the threat of poverty, hunger, and social ostracism.

The conflicts, however, which may arise from the natural individuality of men may not bear the violent and aggressive features which were so frequently attributed to the "state of nature." These features may be the marks of coercion and privation. "Appetite is never excessive, never furious, save when it has been starved. The frantic hunger we see it so often exhibiting under every variety of criminal form, marks only the hideous starvation to which society subjects it. It is not a normal but a morbid state of the appetite, growing exclusively out of the unnatural compression which is imposed upon it by the exigencies of our immature society. Every appetite and passion of man's nature is good and beautiful, and destined to be fully enjoyed. . . . Remove, then, the existing bondage of humanity, remove those factitious restraints which keep appetite and passion on the perpetual lookout for escape, like steam from an overcharged boiler, and their force would instantly become conservative instead of destructive."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Henry James, "Democracy and Its Issues," in *Lectures and Miscellanies*, New York 1852, p. 47f.

## Is National Socialism a New Order?<sup>1</sup>

By Frederick Pollock

When I speak of a new order I do not refer to the new system of frontiers, coalitions, puppet states and such that the Axis is establishing all over Europe or that might be worked out at the forthcoming peace conference. My aim is to clarify the new order as a new social and economic system in contrast to monopoly capitalism. To cite the most obvious example, nineteenth century capitalism must certainly be called a new social and economic system when compared with the feudal order that preceded it. But must we, for instance, also declare monopoly capitalism to be a new order as contrasted with competitive capitalism?

Obviously, we can proceed only after we have chosen a yardstick permitting us to distinguish a new order from an old one. The basic concepts and institutions of our economic and social system must serve as such a yardstick. Only if we agree upon the essential characteristic of our own social system, will the answer to our problem make sense. For those who refuse agreement, the answer will be meaningless.

I should like to put the essential characteristics of modern society under the following headings:

- (1) the ruling class,
- (2) the integration of society,
- (3) the operation of economic life,
- (4) the relation between government and governed,
- (5) the role of the individual.

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<sup>1</sup>The following is the last in a series of five public lectures delivered at Columbia University by the Institute of Social Research during November and December 1941. The other four lectures were:

Herbert Marcuse, *State and Individual under National Socialism*;

A. R. L. Gurland, *Private Property under National Socialism*;

Franz Neumann, *The New Rulers in Germany*;

Otto Kirchheimer, *The Legal Order under National Socialism* (published in this issue.)

The author's task was a two-fold one: to summarize the four preceding lectures and to answer the question whether National Socialism is a new social order. The combination of these two tasks led to the stressing of those points which were discussed before and in which the author partly disagrees with his colleagues.

Since it was impossible to publish the whole series, the text of the concluding lecture is given here in its original form, incorporating the main points of the previous lectures as well as the controversial issues. This lecture represents the application of a general theory of State Capitalism (as outlined on pp. 200ff. of IX, No. 2 of this periodical) to Nazi Germany.



Before we enter into the discussion of these headings we have to make two methodological remarks. (1) No social system is static. A continuous change daily alters the structure of society. Such changes may not be at once apparent. They may be hidden particularly because the institutions remain unchanged while their functions change. The legal institution of property, for instance, has remained unchanged for centuries—and yet the social function of property today radically differs from previous periods. (2) When do changes that gradually creep into an existing order become so vital that we must speak of a structural change entailing a new order? When does quantitative change turn into qualitative change? A convincing answer can only be given after this change has been in progress for a considerable time.<sup>2</sup>

### (1) *The Ruling Class.*

Under National Socialism four groups are in control which are distinctly marked off from each other, have conflicting interests, but are nevertheless bound together by common aims and the fear of common dangers. These four groups are big business, the army, the party, and the bureaucracy. They share among them the coercive power which was previously the monopoly of the state that stood above them all. Whereas until recently in the capitalistic era social power mainly derived from one's property, under National Socialism one's status is determined by his social function. Wealth, acquired or inherited, may and does facilitate access to positions of power, but instead of market laws and property rights, the status of the individual within the group decides the use he can make of his property. This development will be better understood when seen in connection with the universal trend toward a divorce between ownership and control.<sup>3</sup> Side by side with the owner-manager who owns the majority of capital, stands the pure manager, who, having only

<sup>2</sup>For the latest comprehensive material about the National Socialist economy and society see: Franz Neumann, *Behemoth. The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*, New York 1942; Lewis L. Lorwin, *Economic Consequences of the Second World War*, New York 1941 (parts one and three); Maxine Y. Sweezy, *The Structure of the Nazi Economy*, Cambridge, Mass., 1941. The important problem of the connection between the recent technical revolution and the new order has been discussed in A. R. L. Gurland's article on Technological Trends and Economic Structure under National Socialism (IX, No. 2, pp. 226ff. of this periodical).

<sup>3</sup>The American standard work on this trend is still A. A. Berle and G. C. Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, New York 1933. James Burnham, in his *Managerial Revolution* (New York 1941), has tried to discover where this trend is leading to. In a recent article, "Coming Rulers of the U. S." (*Fortune*, November 1941) he has presented his thesis in terms of developments in the United States. It should, however, be noted that Burnham speaks of a *fait accompli* where, so far, a trend only is visible. For the scope of ownership control still existing in the United States, see *The Distribution of Ownership in the 200 Largest Nonfinancial Corporations*, Temporary National Economic Committee, Monograph No. 29, Washington, D. C., 1940.

a minority interest, yet as fully controls the enterprise as the owner-manager. As against these two, who exercise economic power, stands the man who owns capital without exercising power. If his capital is small, he will become a victim of the process of concentration which has been speeded up by the supra-entrepreneurial organization. It may eliminate him by refusing him the right to produce, to buy raw materials, or to hire labor. If, on the other hand, his capital is large and the enterprise sound, the inefficient capitalist will be reduced to a mere rentier.

The situation of private property in Nazi Germany has been summarized as follows:<sup>4</sup> "The legal institution of private property has been preserved under National Socialism. The claim of invested capital for a just return has never been questioned. But the owner's right to control the use of his property is subject to manifold restrictions, the handling of which lies with the supra-entrepreneurial organizations. They are being run by representatives of the most powerful industrial and financial combines. The checks imposed upon the rights of the individual property owners result in an increased power of a few groups every one of which rules over real industrial empires."

I quite agree that the legal institution of private property has been retained and that many of the characteristics shown to be inherent in National Socialism are already apparent, perhaps only in an embryonic stage, in non-totalitarian countries. But does it mean that the function of private property is unchanged? Is the "increased power of a few groups" really the main result of the change that has taken place? I think that it goes far deeper and should be described as the destruction of all but one of the essential characteristics of private property. Even the mightiest combines have been deprived of the right to establish a new business where the highest profits can be expected; or to discontinue production where it becomes unprofitable. These rights have been transferred to the ruling groups as a whole. It is the compromise between the controlling groups which decides on the scope and direction of the productive process; against such decision the property title is powerless even if it is derived from ownership of an overwhelming majority of a stock, not to speak of a minority stock owner.

This view of mine might be challenged by reference to the growth of "internal financing." But "internal financing" is deliberately furthered by the ruling groups to facilitate expansion. Like any

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<sup>4</sup>By A. R. L. Gurland, in his lecture mentioned above.

other investment it depends upon the consent of the authorities and not upon the mere fact that internal funds are available. If the expansion of an enterprise does not fit into the general program of the government, the utilization of the accumulated reserves for plant expansion will be prohibited and the accumulated funds must then be used otherwise, perhaps compulsorily invested in government bonds.

It is hardly necessary to mention that all those who do not belong to the controlling group—the urban and rural middle classes, workers and salaried employees—have no institutionalized means to enforce their wishes upon the rulers. Their organizations have been destroyed or transformed into agencies to dominate them. Only the fear that they could rebel when the pressure from above becomes too strong, makes the pressure from below somewhat effective and enforces concessions.

In this short summary I can neither discuss the transfer of power from finance capital to industry nor the different trends in the position of producers and consumers goods industries. In a complete survey of the changes which have occurred within the ruling class these and other processes would have to be thoroughly analyzed.<sup>5</sup> It is their totality, combined with the change in the functions of property, that, in my opinion, justifies speaking of a qualitative change in the ruling class under National Socialism. Although the power of the industrial monopolists may still be enormous, it is today contingent upon the goodwill and cooperation of the “practitioners of violence” (as Harold Lasswell has aptly termed them).<sup>6</sup>

## (2) *The Integration of Society.*

Under National Socialism the individuals as well as the social groups meet in a way which, in its social meaning and legal status, is totally different from that of the traditional society. In the latter the individuals and strata communicate with each other through the medium of exchange as legally equal partners. Free workers and free entrepreneurs meet each other on the market. Income figures determine the social value and power of the individual.

National Socialism has abolished the last vestiges of such free economic subjects; property and income are no longer the foremost determinants of the individual's social position. Capitalists and

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<sup>5</sup>Cf. Franz Neumann, *op. cit.*, and Otto Kirchheimer, “Changes in the Structure of Political Compromise” in IX, No. 2, pp. 264ff. of this periodical.

<sup>6</sup>Harold D. Lasswell, “The Garrison State” in *The American Journal of Sociology*, No. 4 (1941) pp. 455ff.



labor alike are organized in one all-embracing organization, the Labor Front, and fused ideologically in the people's community. Their relationship is defined as that of leaders and followers, and it is based upon command and obedience. Though wages are paid, they have lost one of their main functions, namely, to distribute the labor power within the economic process. Social power, prestige, and honor now depend decisively upon one's place in the government and party hierarchies. The relation between property, income and social power has thus been radically altered. Money alone gives only limited power or (as in the case of the Jews) no power at all. Political power, in turn, which is equivalent to the control of the means of production, may become the source of practically unlimited income.

It has been suggested that the National Socialist relation of "leader and followers" is equivalent to the feudal relation between lord and vassal. I do not believe this to be true. We must not be deceived by terminological similarities and especially not by skilful National Socialist propaganda which would like us to believe in a paternalistic relation between employer and worker. Feudal society is characterized by the directness of human relations which are based on a contract of trust and faith, incompatible with authoritarian discipline. The leader of a German enterprise is merely a cog in the wheel of a huge bureaucratic machine which has destroyed the last remnants of personal relations still existing in capitalist society.

### (3) *The Operation of Economic Life.*

National Socialism has not created a planned economy so that the whole economic life might be directed and performed according to a well conceived and detailed plan. Its so-called Four Years Plan has never been published, because it does not exist and must be considered a mere ruse to enforce concentration of control and speed-up of armament production. As late as 1941 the *Frankfurter Zeitung*<sup>7</sup> declared that "the problem of a totally planned economy has never been seriously discussed." Planning in Nazi Germany is a mere patchwork of stop gap measures designed to cope with the tasks created by armament and warfare. It has been stressed that the "legislative measures carried through during the first years of National Socialist administration were based on the assumption that the inherited economic system would last forever."<sup>8</sup> In view of the fact that there is no general plan, and no intention of establishing a

<sup>7</sup>In its issue of June 1, 1941.

<sup>8</sup>A. R. L. Gurland, in his lecture mentioned above.

planned economy, in view of the emergency character of preparedness and war economy, many observers believe that no new economic order has arisen. In this view, a highly monopolized war economy has resulted in some strengthening of the monopolistic positions but has left the economic structure untouched. I believe this view to take surface phenomena at face value. Even if the German leadership should be committed to the maintenance of private capitalistic economy, the objective force of its manifold interferences in the economy is more powerful than its pious wishes. Even against its desires and preferences the objective facts are on the way to destroying the old order. One interference of necessity produces another. The leaders are driven to take increasingly drastic steps by the unpleasant alternative of proceeding and having a chance of survival or of stopping and meeting complete collapse. To summarize: all basic concepts and institutions of capitalism have changed their function; interference of the state with the structure of the old economic order has by its sheer totality and intensity "turned quantity into quality," transformed monopoly capitalism into state capitalism.

Let me examine a few details: the market, prices, and profits. It seems certain that no master plan exists for the Nazi economy and it is unlikely that detailed figures have been worked out for the various branches of industry. But there is definitely a detailed plan for agriculture which has led to wholesale regimentation of agricultural production and marketing. For industrial production, however, a clearly defined general program exists embodying the basic aim of National Socialist economy: full employment, utmost non-dependence on imports, withdrawal from consumption of whatever can be spared of the national income, and producing the physical maximum of producers goods in general and armament in particular.

To carry out this program, a variety of methods are at the disposal of the regime; they have been described.<sup>10</sup> The supra-enterpreneurial organizations, federated in the National Economic Chamber, cooperating with the numerous Four Years Plan bureaucracy, obviously bears the brunt of this task. Such central steering of the whole economy leads to the actual disappearance of the market as the steering wheel of production. It is not only that many prices have been frozen. Even where fluctuations of prices are still permitted, prices can no longer serve as signals for increasing or curtailing production. Allocation of raw material, of machinery,

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<sup>10</sup>See this periodical, IX (1941) No. 2, pp. 204ff.

of fuel and of labor were gradually replacing the system of bidding for the factors of production. I don't believe central steering to be merely the result of scarcity that develops in every war economy and disappears with the emergency. On the contrary; the avowed goal of Nazi economic policy is permanent full employment without recurring phases of boom and depression; or, to put it in the words of a Nazi writer, "an epoch without trade cycles which is the fulfillment of National Socialist aims and which spares the employer hard times of losses and the risk of collapse."<sup>11</sup> This goal can only be achieved if the market mechanism is definitely scrapped as the controlling machinery and if centralized control, more centralized than before, is put in its place.<sup>12</sup>

What will be the fate of the so-called economic incentives? Are there no longer profits and is the profit system abolished? I should like to give a paradoxical answer: there are and will be profits in Nazi Germany, even enormous profits for big business, but the profit system, as we have known it, is nevertheless dead. Profits have lost their main economic function, namely, to direct the flow of capital. To put it paradoxically again, under National Socialism production is for use and not for profit. It should be understood that production for use is not intended to mean "for the needs of free men in a harmonious society" but simply the contrary of production for the market. In the capitalist economy production and investment have always swiftly moved into the sphere of the highest profits. Under National Socialism, even the most powerful profit interests become subordinated to the general program. If they act in accordance with this program (and under prevailing circumstances they often do), profits may be made. But the most outrageous profit expectations will lead nowhere if they run contrary to this program. In every case where the interest of single groups or individuals conflicts with the general plan or whatever serves as its substitute, the individual interest must give way. It is the interest of the ruling group as a whole that is decisive, and not the individual interests of those who belong to it. Even very strong particular interests cannot prevent the execution of urgent tasks necessary for the common weal.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup>*Frankfurter Zeitung*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>12</sup>The main arguments for the feasibility of substituting for the market mechanism a control machinery making use of a pseudo-market are given on pp. 204ff. of IX, No. 2, of this periodical.

<sup>13</sup>For the situation in the United States prior to its entry into the war, see the findings of the Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program (Truman Committee). The following blunt statement illustrates our point: "The committee, in the investigations which it has already conducted, has found numerous instances of gross

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Two functions are left to profits in National Socialism: as income for the property owners and as a premium for entrepreneurial efficiency. In the first aspect they are strictly controlled and limited, in the second they are the reward for efforts and accomplishments which are above average. Since business cycles are eliminated it is quite "natural" that "the ever recurring profit for the average entrepreneurial performance, a profit which is not mortgaged by losses and risks, will be smaller than in former times of booms and depressions."<sup>14</sup>

I believe these remarks to be sufficient to clarify my thesis that National Socialism is building a new economic order where the market is replaced by the command.

#### (4) *The Relation between Government and Governed.*<sup>15</sup>

The ruling groups exercise their domination over the masses through bureaucracies which in their upper layers are themselves partners to the "compromise"<sup>16</sup> and which in the lower ranks of police, judiciary and party bureaucracy are the executive organs entrusted with the domestication of the masses.

In this new partnership the spheres of influence are not fixed once and for all. They fluctuate constantly according to the failure or success, relative strength or weakness of a given policy with which one given group may be more intimately associated than another. But these fluctuations do not change two essential facts. First, the position of the individual has largely become dependent upon his status within his group. This status, in turn, is sanctioned and confirmed by administrative orders which have come to supersede the rules of civil law. A new state of affairs has arisen which has aptly been called "a synthesis between government and private enterprise." Second, the consequence of this new synthesis is the disappearance of the rule of law as equally binding on ruler and ruled. The two-sided rationality subjecting rulers and ruled to the same formulas has been replaced by a one-sided technical rationality. The uppermost concern of the government is the precision and speed with which its rapidly changing orders are executed.

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inefficiency and still more instances where the private interests of those concerned have hindered and delayed the defense program. A considerable quantity of supplies and material which we should have today have not been produced and the war effort has been seriously handicapped as a result." (77th Congress, 2nd Session, Senate, Report No. 480, Part 5, Washington, D. C., 1942, p. 2.)

<sup>14</sup>*Frankfurter Zeitung*, loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup>For the following see Otto Kirchheimer's articles on pp. 456ff. of this issue, and pp. 264ff. of IX, No. 2, of this periodical.

<sup>16</sup>See Otto Kirchheimer, loc. cit., p. 264.

Under such a system the executive organs tend to be more and more machinelike, and this machine quality gives the state apparatus its high degree of precision and technical calculability.

Law in Nazi Germany presents a striking example of functional changes. Many of the old legal institutions are still working and still applying time-honored formulas. The staff of the Ministry of Justice is unchanged. The whole difference between democratic and totalitarian laws seems to boil down to a wholesale use of terror by National Socialism. Yet, factually, nothing has been left of the old order of things besides the façade.

(5) *The Role of the Individual.*<sup>17</sup>

The National Socialist regime has, more than any other form of government, unleashed the most brutal instincts of the individual. It regards man only as the ultimate source of that energy on which the gigantic apparatus of domination and expansion feeds. The human individual is cared for and even cherished only insofar as he is the source of labor power, furnishing the instruments of war and expansion. All the official efforts to beautify work and leisure, all the Strength Through Joy activities, serve, in the last analysis, to increase the output of the individual, to strengthen his performance, to enhance his efficiency. The mobilization of the individual is without limits: National Socialism tears down the protective walls which the liberalistic era had erected between private and social life. This mobilization cannot be carried through, however, without compensating the individual for the total loss of his independence. Since every compensation that amounts to a real increase of individual liberty and happiness must, of necessity, endanger the system of domination, a form of satisfaction had to be found which was to intensify rather than weaken the system. Such a form of satisfaction was made possible by the abolition of certain social taboos which, while restricting the drives and desires of the individual, at the same time had guarded his privacy against the interference of state and society. National Socialism has done away with discrimination against illegitimate mothers and children, it has encouraged extra-marital relations between the sexes, and it has transformed this entire sphere of protected privacy into a realm of public service. It must be noted, however, that the increase in liberty and pleasure involved in this abolition of taboos is effectively counteracted by several factors:

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<sup>17</sup>For the problems connected with the role of the individual in modern society, cf. Max Horkheimer's article in this issue.

(1) The very fact that the individual's private satisfaction has become a public affair and an officially rewarded and controlled performance removes the danger implied in such liberation.

(2) The sexual relations have been made instruments for executing the imperialist population policy of the Third Reich. They are thus means to a definite end, which is posited and supervised by the National Socialist regime.

(3) And perhaps most important, the liberation of this sphere is skilfully coordinated with the release of instincts and impulses operating against the enemies and scapegoats of the regime, such as cruelty against the weak and helpless (Jews, feeble-minded and "unfit" persons), hatred of racial aliens, or instincts and impulses operating directly in the interest of the present rulers: masochistic submission to all kinds of commands, to suffering, sacrifice or death. The released individual is thus caught in a physiological and psychological structure which serves to guarantee and perpetuate his oppression.

It would be worthwhile to discuss the fundamental changes in the role of the individual from the point of view of the changed status of the family. The family in Nazi Germany is in full disintegration, deprived of all its former functions. It can no longer protect the individual economically. Words carelessly used in front of one's own children may lead to disaster. Education has passed completely into the hands of the party, and even the family's monopoly on legitimate procreation has been broken.<sup>18</sup> The destruction of the cornerstone of modern society, the family, may prove more convincingly than any other single argument that a New Social Order is being built in Nazi Germany.

I have come to the end of my cursory analysis of the changes in the functions of basic institutions and concepts. I should have added many others, e.g., the nature of the new imperialism. Its decisive difference lies in the fact that oldfashioned imperialism could be saturated, while the new imperialism must incessantly expand until it has attained world domination.

The deeper one goes into the comparison of the old and the new in Nazi Germany, the more one comes to the conclusion that a New Order is in the making, a New Political, Legal, Economic and Social Order. What is this new order and can it last?

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<sup>18</sup>All these and related problems are reported in: Gregor Ziemer, *Education for Death*, New York 1941.



*The New Order—what is it?*

Is it useful to label the new order "State Capitalism"?<sup>19</sup> Serious objections may be raised against this term. There are already grave doubts as to whether it makes sense to call the National Socialist system a state. The word state capitalism, besides, is possibly misleading because it may be understood to denote a society wherein the state is the sole owner of all capital. This is definitely not the case for National Socialism. Nevertheless, the term "State Capitalism" describes better than any other term four properties of the new system: (1) That the new order is the successor of private capitalism, (2) that the state assumes important functions of the private capitalist, (3) that capitalistic institutions like the sale of labor, or profits, still play a significant role, and (4) that it is not Socialism.

Many other labels have been offered in recent discussions, such as controlled economy, state organized monopoly capitalism, totalitarian state economy, neo-mercantilism, bureaucratic collectivism. I believe the term "Command Economy" best expresses the meaning of the new system. This word was first used by a Nazi writer<sup>20</sup> in an article in which he asserts that "competition, monopoly and command, these basic elements of every economic theory, equal each other today in scope as well as in power. But gradually the weight turns in favor of command."<sup>21</sup> What strikes me in the concept "Command Economy" is that it essentially counterposes itself to the concept "Exchange Economy." It suggests an economy which is based upon command in a similar sense as the liberal economy is based upon exchange. It leads logically to describing the new society as a "Command Society" in contrast with the "Exchange Society" of bygone days.

In using these labels, I do not wish to imply that National Socialist Germany is a fully developed state capitalism or a total command economy. I want to stress that the new German system comes closer to these economic concepts than to those of *laissez faire* or of monopoly capitalism.

The differences between the new order and private capitalism need no further discussion. But wherein lies the difference between

<sup>19</sup>See the discussion of this concept on pp. 200ff. in: IX, No. 2, of this periodical.

<sup>20</sup>Willi Neuling, "Wettbewerb, Monopol und Befehl in der heutigen Wirtschaft." Eine Vorstudie zur Neubegründung der deutschen Wirtschaftstheorie, in *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, 1939, pp. 279ff.

<sup>21</sup>*Loc. cit.*, p. 317.

National Socialism and an economy in which "the concentration of economic power in, and financial control over, production and distribution of goods and services"<sup>22</sup> has become typical of most spheres of the economic life? Certainly, under monopoly capitalism many of the conditions of production and distribution are controlled in a way similar to that of National Socialism. In pre-Nazi Germany the quantity and quality of many commodities were fixed by supra-entrepreneurial organizations or straightforward monopolies independent of the laws of the market. Wage and salary scales did not necessarily change with the variations of supply and demand. But the manipulation of the market lay in the hands of antagonistic groups; it was not determined by any other goal than that of bettering their bargaining positions. The interference with the market system made the market more and more unworkable but no provisions were foreseen to eliminate the ever more serious disturbances.

Under National Socialism, we again observe a typical change from quantity into quality. The monopolistic organizations no longer operate as disturbing intruders but take over the market functions as government agents. What formerly were more or less voluntary supra-entrepreneurial organizations have become compulsory and comprehensive. Instead of each specific industrial group fighting for maximum profits at the expense of more and more frequent interruptions of production, they collectively assume the responsibility of coordinating the whole economic process and thereby of maintaining the existing social structure.

This development has been accentuated in the hothouse of the war economy but is far from completed. Bitter struggles between competing groups have made their appearance in the past and will probably come into the foreground again, provided that the whole system will survive the war. Meanwhile the smaller fry is being annihilated at top speed under the impact of priorities, allocations, labor and exchange control.<sup>23</sup>

In following this line of reasoning, the monopolistic phase of German economic development appears as a transitory one. During

<sup>22</sup>This is the Temporary National Economic Committee's official description of its object of investigation.

<sup>23</sup>A similar process is going on in the United States. The *New York Times* (February 6, 1942) quotes a report of the Senate's Special Small Business Committee (Murray Committee): "Small business enterprise . . . is facing bankruptcy and chaos along a wide front. Unless effective measures are taken . . . the postwar period will see it wholly out of the picture. Then, big business, with its branch and chain establishments, backed by great financial and political power, will move in to occupy the entire field. . . . The position of small business has long been precarious. The effect of the defense program has been to grease the skids for it."

a few decades the organs of the new order had been developed, so to speak, in the womb of the *laissez faire* economy. When it became evident that the old system was no longer workable, the new one sprang into being with that incredible ease which can be understood only when we recognize the preceding decades as preparatory to it.

*The New Order—can it last?*

During the last years, we have been driven to ponder again and again the question: can this totalitarian system last, and what are its possibilities and limitations? I do not claim to possess an answer to the manifold problems involved here. What I shall try to discuss, and only briefly, are the economic aspects of the question.

So far, the National Socialist economy has shown an enormous strength under all sorts of pressure and has probably overcome all the handicaps which ought to have led to its doom—in the opinion of many economic experts. These prophets of downfall have overlooked that National Socialism applies a new set of rules to its economic policy, rules which made its economic policy more efficient than anything known heretofore. They have also misjudged the limits of those economic laws which the recognized science of economics has in vain tried to bring under control for the last 150 years.

By a new set of rules I understand those principles which are applied with the purpose of replacing the principles of *laissez faire*. Most of the new rules have been mentioned before, especially the iron necessity of full employment. The totalitarian state is in a position to guarantee one single right to all its "racial comrades," a right which no democratic state so far has been able to grant to its citizens: economic security. This security, it is true, is bought at the expense of a total brutalization of society. Still, the integrative function of full employment in this era of ever more threatening general economic insecurity can hardly be overestimated.<sup>24</sup> It prob-

<sup>24</sup>It is a rapidly spreading opinion that the creation of uninterrupted full employment has become a main economic task in all industrialized countries. The following quotations are representative of numerous others: "The problem of full employment is crucial; it must be solved even at the cost of radically modifying our system. If it is not solved, it will itself modify the system—radically." (Elliot V. Bell in the *New York Times Book Review*, July 27, 1941.)—"The dangerous temptation to barter political freedom for economic security will exist until it is proved by experience that a free government can not only provide a higher but a safer standard of living for the masses than despotism. Yet safety of livelihood can only exist if a sufficient number of jobs is available, and it would be a fatal error to believe that this can be achieved at the end of the war by 'letting nature take its course.'" (Carl Landauer in a letter to the *New York Times*, February 15, 1942.)—" . . . The Free Enterprise System will have to provide full protection, full employment, full distribution of goods and services, or

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ably counts for more in the minds of most people than their standard of living (provided that this standard is not desperately low and has a tendency to improve), it probably counts for more to the small business man than the loss of independence, or to the worker than the loss of his own organization. In following up the purely economic aspects, we find those devices that were designed to replace the functions of the market. There is, firstly, the goal set for all economic activities, a goal which is not based upon the anonymous and unreliable poll of the market, verified *post festum*, but based upon a conscious decision on the ends and means of production before it starts. There is, secondly, the administration of prices which are no longer allowed to behave as masters of the economic process but have been reduced to a closely controlled tool. There is, thirdly, the one which I have already discussed, namely, the subordination of the profit interest to the general economic program. There is, fourthly, the replacement of guess work by the principles of scientific management in all spheres of public activity (and under National Socialism that means in all spheres of social life). Guess work and improvisation must give way to an all-comprehensive technical rationality. This principle of "rationalization" is being applied to spheres which were previously the sanctuary of guess work, of routine and of muddling through, e.g., military preparedness, the conduct of war, manipulation of public opinion, the granting of rewards, the use of the legal machinery, and the "strategy of terror." In the economic realm the same principle has produced many of the successes in rearmament, and counteracted some of the destructive effects of red tape necessarily connected with a scarcity economy.

The recognition of an economic sphere into which the state shall not and cannot intrude, so essential for the era of private capitalism, is being radically repudiated. In consequence, execution of the program is enforced by state power and nothing essential is left to the functioning of laws of the market or other economic "laws." The primacy of politics over economics, so much disputed under democracy, is clearly established.

But have we not been taught that politics cannot successfully interfere with the economic laws and that all attempts to cope with them by political pressure have ended in dismal failure? My answer to this is that as long as economic laws are attacked from the outside

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step aside for government agencies . . . There is no 'return to normalcy' ahead for the old world, whoever wins . . . Our people demand economic freedom and security. If we don't give them their birthright, some other system will attempt the job . . ." (Charles E. Wilson, President of the General Electric Company, in *Readers Digest*, January 1942.)

only (for instance in tampering with money and prices to overcome the fluctuations of the business cycles), all these efforts are in vain. But it is a different story when the economic laws are put out of operation by depriving the market of its main functions. Exactly this is happening in National Socialist Germany. I do not pretend that the ruling groups in Germany have unlimited power in the economic realm—there is no such thing as unlimited power on earth—but I stress that in a command economy the “theoretical laws of classical economic theory as well as of the theory of monopolistic competition are eliminated to a wide degree. Notwithstanding certain unavoidable deviations (which result from the co-existence of residues from the old order) the fundamental fact remains that every command in the economic sphere has acquired a range of discretion. [*Beliebigkeitsspielraum*] which surpasses everything possible under individualistic or monopolistic conditions.”<sup>25</sup>

All this may make most unpleasant hearing for those of us who had hoped that a totalitarian order was bound to collapse as a result of the clash between political aims and economic necessities. As far as the purely economic aspect is concerned, I cannot see serious dangers for the continuance of the new order, if Germany should succeed in acquiring control over an adequate supply of raw material and foodstuffs. We all expect that Germany will suffer military defeat and that the National Socialist system will disappear from the earth. But that is not the point in our present discussion; we are concerned here with the—let us hope purely academic—question whether there are economic limitations of the new order. I do not speak here of the limitations that apply to every social system, e.g., those which result from the necessity to reproduce the given resources, to achieve optimum efficiency, to have a sufficient supply of labor, raw materials and machinery. I am searching for those factors which under conditions of private capitalism tend to create unemployment, overproduction and overinvestment, tend to make accounting impossible and tend to produce a standstill or even retrogression in technical development. In analyzing the structure of state capitalism I am unable to discover such inherent economic forces as would prevent the functioning of the new order. The command economy possesses the means for eliminating the economic causes of depression, cumulative destructive processes and unemployment of capital and labor. Economic problems in the old sense no longer exist when the coordination of all economic activities is effected consciously instead of by the “natural laws” of the market.

<sup>25</sup>Willi Neuling, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

There are indeed limitations to the possibilities of the new order but they derive from the very structure of the society which state capitalism seeks to perpetuate and from the opposition of the non-totalitarian outside world. If the democracies can show that economic security must not be tied up with the loss of liberty but can be achieved under democratic conditions, then I dare forecast that the new order of National Socialism will be followed in Germany and elsewhere by an infinitely superior democratic new order.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>An attempt to outline an economic program for such a democratic "new order" was recently made by Alvin H. Hansen in a pamphlet issued by the National Resources Planning Board, *After the War—Full Employment*, Washington, D. C., 1942. Hansen formulates the problem as follows: "If the victorious democracies muddle through another decade of economic frustration and mass unemployment, we may expect social disintegration and, sooner or later, another international conflagration. A positive program of post-war economic expansion and full employment, boldly conceived and vigorously pursued, is imperative. Democracies, if they are going to lead the world out of chaos and insecurity, must first and foremost offer their people opportunity, employment, and a rising standard of living."



## The Legal Order of National Socialism<sup>1</sup>

By Otto Kirchheimer

It is one of the strongest contentions of the National Socialist legal system that it has finally closed the gap which, under the liberal era, had separated the provinces of law and morality.<sup>2</sup> Henceforth, the legal and the moral order are one and the same. What is the reality against which we have to measure this contention? The National Socialist legal order substitutes racial homogeneity for equality, and therefore abandons the conception of human beings equipped with similar capacities and equally capable of bearing legal rights and duties. It was easy for the Nazis to make fun of this conception. Under the conditions of our advanced industrial society, it usually did not offer a profitable tool for the adjustment of differences which frequently represented claims of social groups and not of mere individuals. But our legal heaven does not consist exclusively of group claims and counter claims. There exist also parallel relations among individuals and between the individual and the state. Indeed the subjection of individual and government alike to the same rules of the game is one of the happiest and not unintentional consequences of the liberal emphasis on general notions, with its quest for equality between the contending parties. Under the veil of the community ideology, the system of general legal conceptions equally applicable to all cases falls.<sup>3</sup> With it falls the beneficial fiction of a government bound by law to the same rules as the individual contesting its commands. Now the individual is checked by two forces, the official social grouping and the government, whose commands are not subject to discussion and who are organized so that their jurisdictional disputes cannot be exploited by the individual. The individual is subjected to the law of his professional group as well as to the impetuous command of the state. For the run of his daily task the government relinquishes him to the paternal care of the group, but does not hesitate to make use of its own coercive machinery when the latter's persuasive and dis-

<sup>1</sup>Public lecture given in Columbia University in December 1941.

<sup>2</sup>H. Frank, *Rechtsgrundlegung des Nationalsozialistischen Führerstaates*, Munich 1938, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. G. A. Walz, *Artgleichheit gegen Gleichartigkeit*, Hamburg 1938, p. 19.

ciplinary means of professional, racial, and intellectual co-ordination and discrimination have been of no avail. The group's police power is in itself no creation of the National Socialist regime. But before, the power of the professional and trade associations was limited by the individual's chance to stand aloof from them and was further subjected to the rule of the civil law interpreted by the civil courts. With the access to power of National Socialism the common legal bond of a generally applicable civil law disappeared more and more, and at the same time the professional organizations lost their voluntary character. The labor organization, economic groups, the handicraft and peasant organizations became compulsory organizations. By the same token the National Socialist system dispensed with an outside body to whose authority a group member could appeal when faced with an inequitable group decision.<sup>4</sup>

The authority of the group bureaucracy in industry, trade and the professions, representing the most powerful interests or combinations of interests, is steadily increasing with the number of executive tasks relinquished to them by the state bureaucracy.<sup>5</sup> For this reason the conventional notions of property and expropriations are in need of redefinition. What profit an individual is able to draw from his real property, trade or ownership of means of production, depends mainly on his status within his professional group and on the general economic policy of the government. It is the group that determines the quota of available raw material and with its authoritative advice guides the labor authorities in deciding the vital question as to the labor force to which an individual entrepreneur should be entitled.<sup>6</sup> Should his property lose its economic value in consequence of such decisions of the group bureaucracy, it is once more the organs of the group and not the courts that will decide whether and

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<sup>4</sup>Even in cases involving the coercive power of an organization as much affected with public interest as that of the social insurance doctors, the civil courts have shown the utmost reluctance to examine the orders of the group leadership which deprive a member of his livelihood. Cf. German Supreme Court, April 26, 1940, *Entscheidungen des Reichsgerichts in Zivilsachen*, 164, pp. 15, 32; German Supreme Court, December 21, 1937, *Zeitschrift der Akademie für Deutsches Recht*, 1938, p. 131, with comment by E. R. Huber; L. Kattenstroh, "Rechtscharakter und Nachprüfbarkeit von Anordnungen der Wirtschaftsgruppen," in *Deutsches Recht*, 1939, p. 676.

<sup>5</sup>The most recent shifts in the distribution of functions between state bureaucracy and group bureaucracy have been discussed by A. Dresbach, "Ämter und Kammern, Bemerkungen über die staatliche Wirtschaftsverwaltung," in *Die Wirtschaftskurve*, 1941, No. 3, p. 193.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. "Auskämmungskommission," in *Frankfurter Zeitung*, May 18, 1941, Nos. 250-251, p. 7. Interestingly enough in this commission where members of the military and the state bureaucracy, of the bureaucracy of the groups and the chambers of commerce are always present, representatives of the Labor Front are called upon only irregularly.

to what amount and in what form indemnity may be granted.<sup>7</sup> They also will decide whether his exclusion from the rank of the producers shall be permanent or transitory, whether he should be allowed some trade privileges or should become a rentier fed on a more or less liberal allowance, to be paid by his more fortunate competitors, or whether, as in the handicraft organization, he should simply be thrown into the ranks of the working class.<sup>8</sup> The logic of economic concentration has never worked more smoothly than when the ideology of the community deprived the weaker group member of the right to appeal to an outside body which would be prepared to maintain the intra-group balance. In the same vein the separation of the legal title to property from the entrepreneurial function has been legally stabilized by the new joint-stock company legislation. The minority stockholder has lost the last vestiges of legally enforceable influence on the administration of industrial enterprise, regardless of whoever may actually be in control, the old majority interests or new managerial elements. If the newspapers and court decisions report at length instances of legal skirmishes between minority stockholders and the controlling group of an enterprise, this may serve the welcome aim of humanizing the world of corporate giants, but the decisions on the scant amount of information to be thrown open to stockholders do not affect the security of tenure assured to the controlling group and the complete economic domination it may exercise.

In the realm of agriculture, the government has gone as far as to sanction the redefinition of property relations brought about by the activity of the official groupings, which are more tightly knit in this field than in any other.<sup>9</sup> In the hereditary farm legislation it has created a powerful tool for the preservation of an agricultural aristocracy and middle-class throughout the whole country. The creation and the security of tenure of a class of well-to-do peasants and landowners was of such great concern to the government that it took pains to create a strict legal order of succession in favor of the oldest or, as the local custom may be, the youngest son of the family, pushing the other children into the ranks of the proletariat. The decisions

<sup>7</sup>Cf. F. Wieacker, "Die Enteignung," in *Deutsches Verwaltungsrecht*, Munich 1937, p. 749. The practice of the estate courts in indemnity cases is discussed by L. Gebhard and H. Merkel, *Das Recht der landwirtschaftlichen Marktordnung*, Munich 1937, and by P. Giesecke, "Entschädigungspflicht bei marktordnenden Massnahmen," in *Festschrift für Justus Hedemann*, Jena 1938, p. 368.

<sup>8</sup>We do not have figures on the depletion of these groups as a result of the war combing-out measures. As regards the pre-war figures cf. *Der Vierjahresplan*, 1939, p. 1029.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. the remarks of A. Dresbach, *op. cit.*, p. 196.



of the special hereditary farm courts make it abundantly clear that undivided preservation of substantial agricultural units in the same family takes precedence over considerations of proven ability.<sup>10</sup> The legislation on the so-called dissolution of entailed property, which enables the Junkers to take cover under the status of hereditary farmers, follows exactly the same pattern. When the present occupant of the entailed estate is in good standing with the authorities and the undivided preservation of his property fits into the Food Estate's agricultural program, he will become a "peasant."<sup>11</sup>

This legislation was introduced without delay in the territories regained from Poland.<sup>12</sup> While the great landowners thus get preferential treatment, the inverse process may be observed with regard to the internal settlement and colonization policy.<sup>13</sup> Under the Third Reich the internal settlement policy, which theoretically at least would have corresponded so well to the blood and soil ideology, receded more and more into the background. Agriculture now takes on the color of a large scale industry; small units vanish, mechanization advances, cheap labor is furnished by the government, products are standardized and their sale monopolized by the Food Estate bureaucracy that fixes the prices in a bargaining process with the other powers of the realm.

In the case of the hereditary farmer, the government has taken care to lay down binding legal rules of succession in the interest of conserving a reliable rural upper class and in order to produce a maximum amount of staple food. In all other cases the new statute on wills of July 31, 1938 left fairly intact the right of the individual to dispose of his worldly goods.<sup>14</sup> It only strengthened the position of the family of the testator and gave government and family the legal weapons to harass the churches in case they might be beneficiaries and to nullify all dispositions in which an absent minded testator might have shown some affection for a Jew or other enemy of the community.<sup>15</sup> This freedom to testate would be a problematical one and would not hinder the breaking-up of big industrial and rural estates if the legal succession were subject to a heavy tax

<sup>10</sup>Supreme Hereditary Farm Court, May 30, 1939, *Entscheidungen des Reichserbhofgerichts*, 6, p. 295; December 20, 1939, 7, p. 237, and January 30, 1940, 7, p. 256.

<sup>11</sup>Statute of July 6, 1938, art. 31, 1, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1938, 1, p. 825, Decree of March 20, 1939, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 509.

<sup>12</sup>Decree of March 18, 1941, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1941, 1, p. 154.

<sup>13</sup>*Wirtschaft und Statistik*, 1941, p. 285.

<sup>14</sup>*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1941, 1, p. 973.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. A. Roth, "Zum Art. 48, 2 des Testamentgesetzes," in *Deutsches Recht*, 1941, p. 166, and G. Boehmer, "Die guten Sitten im Zeichen nationalsozialistischer Familienpflicht," in *Zeitschrift der Akademie für Deutsches Recht*, 1941, p. 73; German Supreme Court, September 17, 1940, and September 19, 1940, *ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

burden as is now the case in England and the United States. But the German inheritance tax as established in 1925 was already comparatively mild, and it was further modified in 1934 in the same direction by granting more generous exemptions to smaller fortunes and large families and total exemption for the succession into a hereditary farm. Inheritance tax rates for children do not exceed 15% in the highest bracket. That the inheritance tax is meaningless in terms of the German tax system may be seen from the fact that out of 23 billion marks total revenue collected in 1939, only 104 millions—that is to say, not even one half of one per cent—was derived from inheritance taxes.<sup>16</sup> Thus, of the two pillars which characterize the legal order of the liberal era, private property in the means of production and the freedom of contract, property, even if heavily mortgaged to the political machine, has managed to survive. But what about contracts? Is it still justifiable to say, as is officially done in Germany,<sup>17</sup> that the liberty of contract together with private property, competition and the continuance of free private trade associations form the irreplaceable fundamentals of the racial community? This characteristic utterance itself gives a clue to the answer. The right to combine freely into trade associations is, under prevailing German conditions, synonymous with the existence of powerful cartels and combines, which exercise public power either directly or under the thin disguise of official chambers and groups. Liberty of contract and government-sponsored monopoly are incompatible. The effect of this state of affairs was to reduce to a minimum the sphere in which free contracts are still concluded. We witness an acceleration of the long drawn-out process by which general norms and conditions are substituted for individual contracts. The conditions of business relations between producers in different stages of the process of production, or between producers and agents of distribution, are either covered in advance by a general agreement between partners of approximately equal economic strength or are forced by the more powerful party on its economically weaker partner. Only where this unilateral dictate threatened to become too disastrous in its possible consequences, did the government take the supervision of these dictated norms into its own hands. Under the Third Reich the pseudo-contractual relations shaped by such unilateral dictates are steadily increasing. As cartels acquire official titles as authorities for distribution, their clients can do

<sup>16</sup>*Wirtschaft und Statistik*, 1941, p. 235. It should be borne in mind that there is only a Reich Inheritance Tax in Germany.

<sup>17</sup>C. H. Nipperdey, "Das System des bürgerlichen Rechts," in *Zur Erneuerung des Bürgerlichen Rechts*, Munich 1938, p. 99, and Hans Frank, *Rechtsgrundlagen des Nationalsozialistischen Führerstaates*, Munich 1938, p. 21.

nothing but acquiesce in the general conditions laid down by them. Criticism and suggestions of academic writers notwithstanding, the general norms and conditions incessantly replace liberty of contract and make it meaningless.<sup>18</sup> But whereas the government took only an intermittent interest in the conditions under which so-called free contracts were concluded, it did not hesitate to interfere more and more with the stages of execution of individual contracts. At first it limited its interference by refusing the creditor its help in executing a judgment against a small debtor. Later it went further and extended to every reliable racial comrade the help of the judge in getting wholly or partially rid of the debts he had contracted during the "pseudo-prosperity" period or the previous depression.<sup>19</sup> The war decrees generously widened the frame of this legislation. Liquidation of most of the small creditor-debtor relations, whether they concern rents, mortgages, doctor's or furniture bills, was entrusted to the administrative skill of a judge, who was expected to alleviate the little man's burden wherever feasible.<sup>20</sup> Contract, therefore, is steadily disappearing from the legal horizon of Mr. Everyman. The workers, the small businessmen and the small farmers as well as the consumers in general have no bargaining power, as they are prohibited from combining for such purposes. The local representatives of the Party, of the Labor Front or of the National Socialist welfare organizations, may find it convenient to recommend a change in a particular working, wage, distribution or price arrangement. They may or may not be able to carry their point against the industry and industry's bureaucratic spokesmen. But these battles are fought and compromises are reached over the head of Mr. Everyman. For him contract has been replaced by the peculiar compound of private command and administrative order. This compound, which joins in the same individual undertaking the interest of private property and of the administration, the private advantage,

<sup>18</sup>The German literature in this field is increasing. We note only the scholarly discussion by L. Raiser, *Recht der Allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen*, Hamburg 1935; the characteristically vague reform proposals by H. Brandt, "Die allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen und das sogenannte dispositive Recht," in *Deutsche Rechtswissenschaft*, 5 (1940), p. 76; and the cocksure attitude of the representative of industry, C. van Erkelens, "Lieferbedingungen der Industrie im Kampf der Meinungen," in *Zeitschrift der Akademie für Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 367. More interesting than the theoretical discussion is the attitude of the bureaucracy which favors more and more the policy to make standardized contracts universally binding and applicable. Cf. C. Ritter, "Legalisierung der allgemeinen deutschen Spediteurbedingungen," in *Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 779, and especially K. Nehring, "Das neue deutsche Speditionsrecht," in *Hanseatische Rechts- und Gerichtszeitung*, 1940, 23 (1940), Abt. A, pp. 75, 80.

<sup>19</sup>Statute of August 17, 1938, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1938, 1, p. 1033. Cf. H. Vogel, "Die Rechtsprechung zur Schuldenbereinigung," in *Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 1343.

<sup>20</sup>Decree of September 3, 1940, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1940, 1, p. 1209. Cf. Breithaupt, "Die Neufassung des Gesetzes über eine Bereinigung alter Schulden," in *Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 1602.



and the public purpose, is one of the first characteristics of the new legal order. Taken in this sense, the National Socialist legal doctrine rightly claims to have overcome the traditional gulf between private and public law.<sup>21</sup> Free agreement and contract are restricted to the province of the mighty. Their contract, in turn, has lost its private character, since their working agreements are the basis of the new constitutional order.

We may venture to define the present conditions of property in Germany as follows: the ranks of the proprietary class, controlling the means of production, are steadily shrinking through such well-known devices as concentration, Aryanization, combing-out legislation, quota restrictions and closing-down "on account of war emergency."<sup>21a</sup> Those proprietary elements that belong to the rentier group suffer from the administration's control over investment conditions and rents. They suffer also from the general ability to gain a foothold in the process of production, which, with the administration's active furtherance, has been monopolized by a few powerful individuals and combines. New property titles are accumulating in the hands of the newcomers from the ranks of party, army and bureaucracy. Yet, members of these groups do not always find it advisable to acquire formal titles to property but find it sufficient for their purpose to reap the fruit of administrative control. The freedom to transfer property titles and the lack of onerous inheritance taxes are intended to perpetuate the property structure as it is developing from this process of concentration.

The German lawyer has acquired the habit of separating rather sharply the rules which dominate family life from the realm of contractual property relations. In fact, it is one of the most frequent reproaches against the old civil code that its general rules placed business relations on the same footing as the order of the family; the National Socialist legislation takes pride in having radically separated the issues of blood and money.<sup>22</sup> It contends that in its new racial and family law it has prepared a basis for the development of the racial community. This new legislation excels in two characteristics: the thoroughgoing extirpation of the Jews and, above all, its outspoken populationist traits. We do not have to dwell here upon the anti-Semitic legislation, as it constitutes the most widely known element of the German legislative and administrative endeavors. The

<sup>21</sup>E. R. Huber, "Neue Grundlagen des Hoheitlichen Rechts," in *Grundfragen der neuen Rechtswissenschaft*, 1935, pp. 143, 151.

<sup>21a</sup>Even the German legal literature has to recognize this process. Cf. J. W. Hedemann, *Deutsches Wirtschaftsrecht*, Berlin 1939, p. 209: "The distribution of property becomes more critical or assumes at least other forms."

<sup>22</sup>F. Schlegelberger, *Abschied vom B. G. B.*, Munich 1937, p. 9.

populationist traits of the new family legislation are visible everywhere. They are evident in the social and welfare policy, with marriage loans, substantial tax reductions and exemptions and special family allowances. They are evident in the manifold attempts to improve the position of illegitimate mothers and children. That such adjustment measures are due not to moral or humanitarian but to purely populationist motives, a recent edict shows very distinctly. This edict orders the school authorities to see to it that illegitimate children do not feel at a disadvantage psychologically, provided that racially and biologically they are not objectionable.<sup>23</sup> The exemption of parents from punishment under anti-procurement statutes in case they allow their children to have pre-marital sexual intercourse under their own roof has been forced on a recalcitrant higher judiciary, mainly by the propaganda of the influential weekly of the SS. Blackshirts, *Das Schwarze Korps*.<sup>24</sup> In spite of earlier judicial utterances to the contrary, an employer is no longer allowed to dismiss female workers on grounds of pregnancy, regardless of whether the expectant mother is or is not married.<sup>25</sup> This relaxation of conventional moral conceptions, noticeable everywhere in Germany, was accompanied by open attacks on some of the most basic doctrines of the established churches, calculated to keep down to a minimum any ecclesiastical influence on the social life of the family. Since millions of Germans today live a barracks life rather than a family life, the State found it easy to encourage *ad hoc* sexual relations. Together with this encouragement went the official endeavors to minimize legal as well as social consequences of illegitimacy. Such moves could not fail to influence deeply the sex mores of the German population and especially of German youth, who would, of course, be more immediately affected. This change in turn was bound to leave a heavy imprint on the institution of marriage, even if not a single word of the family law, as contained in the old civil code, had been changed. But, in fact, the government subjected the family law to complete revision in 1938.<sup>26</sup>

While this policy generally transforms every woman into an official agent of procreation, marriage in particular is regarded as a state institution to which the main responsibility for raising the

<sup>23</sup>Edict of the Ministry of Education of May 29, 1940, reprinted in *Deutsche Justiz*, 102 (1940), p. 1143.

<sup>24</sup>German Supreme Court, June 29, 1937, and the new line of thought in the decision of the Cottbus *Schöffengericht* of February 7, 1937, in *Juristische Wochenschrift*, 1937, pp. 2386-2389.

<sup>25</sup>German Supreme Labor Court, August 21, 1937, *Juristische Wochenschrift*, 1937, p. 3057.

<sup>26</sup>Statute of July 6, 1938, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1938, 1, p. 807.

birthrate has been transferred. Marriage becomes a business relationship, the success or failure of which is measured in terms of the production of soldiers and future mothers who live up to the physical and intellectual standards of the Third Reich. The Hereditary Health Courts are instituted to uphold such standards at the admission into marriage and during its continuance; divorce and annulment procedures perform the same tasks at its dissolution. Under the limited divorce facilities granted by the earlier German legislation, the parties who wanted to separate usually had to reach collusive agreement which then was registered by the court under one of the existing legal categories. The new statute of 1938 has opened a wide field for controversial divorce proceedings by abandoning the principle of guilt. It has introduced a number of situations in which circumstances outside the control of the partners are grounds for a divorce. Foremost is the sterility of either partner, but contagious diseases, mental defects or a three-year separation are also sufficient grounds for issuance of a divorce decree.<sup>27</sup> Whatever progressive characteristics this statute may have had, they have been completely submerged in the course of its interpretation by the courts. Not in all cases may the decisions rendered be as crude and morally shocking as the following one handed down by the German Supreme Court. A woman had lost her fertility through an operation necessitated by an abdominal cavity pregnancy. The husband's request for a divorce was granted and a plea of duress was denied to the defendant mainly on the grounds that the state had an active interest in the plaintiff's getting children from a new marriage.<sup>28</sup> But such decisions set precedents, and it is no wonder that the chief reasoning in divorce cases gravitates more and more around the rights and duties deriving from the fulfillment, partial fulfillment, or impossibility of fulfillment of maternal functions.<sup>29</sup> On the one hand, egotistical or immoral motivations of a partner are encouraged when they happen to coincide with the government's desire to raise the birthrate.<sup>30</sup> But on the other hand, the same official considerations may lead to the maintenance of an entirely meaningless marriage as a reward for services a mother has rendered to the state by the production of a numerous progeny.<sup>31</sup> It is too early to surmise all the consequences of this policy. The rise in the rate of divorce and annulment proceedings, which began immediately after 1933, may have been par-

<sup>27</sup>*Loc. cit.*, Art. 50-55.

<sup>28</sup>German Supreme Court, September 5, 1940, *Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 2001.

<sup>29</sup>German Supreme Court, June 29, 1940, *ibid.*, p. 1567; July 8, 1940, *ibid.*, p. 1627.

<sup>30</sup>German Supreme Court, May 7, 1940, *ibid.*, p. 1362.

<sup>31</sup>German Supreme Court, March 6, 1940, *ibid.*, p. 1050; March 20, 1940, *ibid.*, p. 1049; May 22, 1940, *ibid.*, p. 1363.



tially caused during the first years by the desire of many to avail themselves of generous facilities for getting rid of Jewish partners.<sup>32</sup> Under the new law of 1938, the divorce rate, as was to be expected, jumped up. In 1939, out of every 10,000 marriages 38 were terminated by divorce as against 29 in 1932 and 32 in 1936.<sup>33</sup> That the institution of marriage does not stand to win much by its instrumentalization, which makes it the most convenient breeding agency, seems a fairly safe conclusion.

Before we enter into a discussion of the ways and methods peculiar to the coercive machinery of the Third Reich, let us have a moment's look at the personnel which runs this machine and at the principles according to which it is run. The personnel of the judicial bureaucracy, especially in the higher ranks, still consists overwhelmingly of the very persons who held office under, and to the detriment of, the Weimar Republic. As late as the beginning of 1941, a lifelong member of the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Justice, Dr. Schlegelberger, was appointed Acting Minister of Justice.

Yet, under the traditional conceptions, the judiciary is only a concomitant to an established body of laws which it adapts to the special needs of the community. The procedural formulas which it develops provide a certain amount of predictability.<sup>34</sup> The contending individuals and groups, though they never are sure which of the many possible interpretations of their behavior will prevail in a given case, usually could confine their actions within such limits that these could not be said to contradict openly the wording of the law and the procedural requirements of the established courts and agencies. The business of individualization carried on by the courts contained a certain amount of rationality, insofar as their decisions tried to satisfy as many as possible of the so-called legitimate interests of society.

The rationality which we can observe in the courts and agencies of the Third Reich is of quite a different nature. Rationality here does not mean that there are universally applicable rules the con-

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<sup>32</sup>As late as 1939 an appeal court helped a writer to an annulment of his marriage, reasoning that only after the events of 1938 (vom Rath assassination and November pogroms) did the appellant get a clear perception of the Jewish question. Munich, Appeal Court, December 11, 1939, *ibid.*, p. 327.

<sup>33</sup>*Wirtschaft und Statistik*, 1941, p. 37, including some interesting comments showing how the rise of the birth rate has become the uppermost official consideration.

<sup>34</sup>*Vide* K. Loewenstein, "Law in the Third Reich," in *Yale Law Journal*, 45 (1936), pp. 779, 782, 814.

sequences of which could be calculated by those whom they affect.<sup>35</sup> Rationality here means only that the whole apparatus of law and law-enforcing is made exclusively serviceable to those who rule. Since no general notions prevail which could be referred to by the ruling and the ruled alike and which thus might restrict the arbitrariness of the administrative practice, the rules are being used to serve the specific purposes of those ruling. The legal system that results is rational for them only. This, then, is a strictly Technical Rationality which has as its main and uppermost concern the question: How can a given command be executed so as to have the maximum effect in the shortest possible time? In a recent speech Reich Minister Hans Frank, President of the Academy of German Law and Governor General of Poland, quite correctly compared this kind of rationality to the working of a good machine. "A smoothly functioning and technically superior administration is to a chaotic despotism what precision machinery is to an unreliable makeshift instrument producing only chance results."<sup>36</sup> Frank wants the industrial methods of taylorism introduced into the realm of statecraft in order to get the most precise answer to the question as to how the will of the political leadership can be put into practical effect as speedily as possible. Such an attitude is not the wishful dream of a particular if highly placed individual. Technical rationality simply follows a pattern drawn by the organization of industry. There, it was not conceived as a method for production departments only. The now officially sponsored Dinta (Institute for Scientific Management and Rationalization of Work), when still owned by representatives of industry, was the first to introduce the same principle into the business of human relations.<sup>37</sup> Technical rationality, as dominant over all governmental organization, precludes the existence of a general body of law in which the rules do evolve but slowly. Under the new system, a legal rule can have only a purely provisional character; it must be possible to change a rule without notice, and, if necessary, retroactively. The Third Reich, with an unlimited legislative and decree power given the Führer and liberally delegated by him to his paladins, amply provides for such facilities. With this legislative omnipotence and latitude for delegations goes also an unlimited

<sup>35</sup>Cf. the opposite conclusions drawn by E. Fraenkel, *The Dual State*, New York 1941, who holds that the existence of a rational law is necessary for the existence of a monopoly-capitalist society, overestimating, however, the importance of some isolated judicial decisions of the earlier epoch. *Vide* my review of this excellent book in *Political Science Quarterly*, 56 (1941), p. 434.

<sup>36</sup>H. Frank, "Technik des Staates," in *Zeitschrift der Akademie für deutsches Recht*, 1941, p. 2f.

<sup>37</sup>As to the Dinta cf. F. L. Neumann, *Behemoth. The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*, New York 1942, p. 429.

willingness to abandon any pretense of logical coherence. Out of every individual situation the maximum of advantage must be drawn, even if the second step contradicts the premises under which the first was taken.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, technical rationality makes it necessary to search always for the shortest ways of transmission from the top to the bottom. That too has been taken care of. Once an agreement is reached by the mighty of the realm and promulgated under the Führer's authority, there is no intermediary organ which could venture to arrest or delay its execution. No court has the right to contest the constitutionality or legality of any legislative enactment. Whereas the judge is given a certain amount of leeway to examine the extent to which anterior legislation conforms to the National Socialist principles,<sup>39</sup> he is emphatically discouraged from making similar inquiries into any piece of Nazi legislation.<sup>40</sup> In short, the idea of technical rationality which underlies the new governmental organization actually finds its nearest approximation in a perfectly running, though complicated, piece of machinery. Nobody save the owners are entitled to question the meaningfulness of the services which the machine performs: the engineers who actually operate it have to content themselves with producing immediate reactions to the owners' changing commands. They may be ordered to proceed more rapidly or more slowly, they may be ordered to change some technical processes and to attain some variations in output. The purport of the results achieved lies beyond this kind of rationality, which is aimed only at the certainty that every order will produce an exactly calculable reaction.

In its judiciary the Third Reich has created an almost perfect tool for the realization of its orders. For reasons we have already explained before, the judiciary has lost much of its earlier importance as an agency for deciding differences between various groups and between individuals. The judicial statistics amply prove this thesis. With the above mentioned exception of matrimonial cases, the number of legal procedures shows a startling decline. Thus, for instance, the roles of those courts which had jurisdiction over civil disputes involving 500 RM or more show a decline from 319,000 cases in the prosperity year of 1929 to 112,000 in 1937.<sup>41</sup> That

<sup>38</sup>Cf., for instance, the Decree of March 27, 1941, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1941, 1, p. 177, which legalizes until December 31, 1942, the practice of Aryan successors to Jewish business concerns carrying on their premises the name of their Jewish predecessors side by side with their own.

<sup>39</sup>On National Socialist "equity" cf. K. Loewenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 804.

<sup>40</sup>German Supreme Court, June 17, 1940, *Zeitschrift der Akademie für Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 304.

<sup>41</sup>*Deutsche Justiz*, 100 (1938), p. 1140.



does not necessarily mean that the courts are going out of business. But they have thoroughly changed their character. From independent agencies of society, able to throw their weight with any of the contending social groups, they have turned into executive agencies of the government. They are employed with preference where a certain amount of individualization is desired. As such they clear up the debtor-creditor or producer-consumer relation, and as such they decide many of the issues which come up in the course of the racial legislation.

As the law, decree, or edict on whose authority the judge bases his decision can be changed without delay, an inopportune decision of his has only the effect that the legal rule will be immediately changed. In the realm of criminal law, the stake of the authority of the state is too important to allow an undesirable decision to go unchallenged. The war legislation has, therefore, introduced the possibility of changing every individual criminal judgment in the desired direction. A Special Section of the *Reichsgericht* is directed to take up the case again and revise the decision<sup>42</sup> in the direction desired by the Führer as indicated by the *Oberreichsanwalt*. The first case to be carried before the Special Section was as follows: A man known for a long time to be a homosexual had profited from the blackout to force a younger man to become the object of his desires. A Special Court had sentenced the offender to hard labor. There are no appeals by either the defendant or prosecutor from sentences imposed by the Special Courts. Nevertheless, under the new law, the case was reopened before the Special Section of the *Reichsgericht* at the request of the *Oberreichsanwalt* and terminated, as desired, in a death sentence.<sup>43</sup>

A decision which is disadvantageous to government interests, though rarely apt to be forthcoming, is frequently of neither legal nor social consequence for the establishment of a precedent for future cases arising in similar circumstances. In addition the judge, like any other administrative official, is accountable for the contents of his decision. Where the relentless pressure of the party through channels like the *Schwarze Korps* should prove of no avail, the new organizational statutes provide ample facilities for dis-

<sup>42</sup>Decree of September 16, 1939, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 1841. Cf. W. Tegtmeier, "Der ausserordentliche Einspruch," in *Juristische Wochenschrift*, 1939, p. 2060, and my article "Criminal Law in National Socialist Germany" in this periodical, VIII, pp. 444ff.

<sup>43</sup>German Supreme Court (Special Section), December 6, 1939, *Zeitschrift der Akademie für deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 48, with comment by Klee.

charging or transferring a recalcitrant judge.<sup>44</sup> The judiciary is entitled to have and to express opinions of its own only in those cases where it does not act as a kind of common executive organ to the combined ruling classes. There are some boundary spheres where the distribution of power between the mighty of the realm has not been finally settled. The judiciary, for instance, may trespass into the sphere of the party and try with varying success to apply the general rules of civil and criminal responsibility to acts of party officials.<sup>45</sup> The party, of course, does not stand by passively in such jurisdictional conflicts, and presses forward vigorous attacks of its own against the bureaucracy. Right now it uses the party-dominated police as a cover to wrest from the judicial bureaucracy the complete control of the criminal police and, therewith, the final direction of criminal prosecution.<sup>46</sup> Generally speaking, however, the industrialists and landowners, party and army, as well as the corresponding bureaucracies, jealously see to it that nobody trespasses into the provinces carved out for each by common agreement; the tendency is, therefore, towards departmentalization, towards disappearance of a unified system of law behind innumerable steadily increasing special competences. If technical rationality is nevertheless to be preserved, two conditions have to be fulfilled. First, every official agency must grant recognition to an official act of other public agencies. Second, each of these groups must be equipped with a penal power of its own in order to execute swift reprisals against malefactors in its own sphere. The party has established its own jurisdiction over its members and over its special subdivisions like the SS;<sup>47</sup> the army achieved the reestablishment of

<sup>44</sup>Judges are subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Statute. *Vide* A. Brand, *Das Deutsche Beamtengesetz*, Berlin 1937, p. 462. Regarding the possibilities of transferring judges to other jobs, cf. the Decree of September 1, 1939, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 1658, and especially Art. 4,3 of the "Decree on the Organization of a Supreme Administrative Court" of April 3, 1941, *ibid.*, 1941, 1, p. 201. For an interesting definition of the meaning of judicial independence under National Socialism, cf. Hans Frank, "Reichsverwaltungsgericht," in *Deutsches Recht*, 1941, p. 1169.

<sup>45</sup>A. Lingg, *Die Verwaltung der NSDAP*, Berlin, 1940, p. 257. The right of the courts to pass on this question is upheld by S. Grundmann, "Die richterliche Nachprüfung von politischen Führungsakten," in *Zeitschrift für die gesamten Staatswissenschaften*, 100 (1940), pp. 511ff., and by the German Supreme Court, February 17, 1939, *Deutsches Recht*, 1939, p. 1785.

<sup>46</sup>W. Best, *Die Deutsche Polizei*, Darmstadt 1940, p. 28, against which E. R. Huber is polemizing in his review, in *Zeitschrift für die gesamten Staatswissenschaften*, 101 (1941), p. 723, where he gives the legal and administrative arguments of the higher bureaucracy in its fight to restrict Party influence.

<sup>47</sup>One of the first statutes of the Third Reich, dated April 28, 1933, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1933, 1, p. 230, enables the Führer to institute special disciplinary and penal courts for the SA and SS. Cf. also the Decree of October 17, 1939, *ibid.*, 1939, 1, p. 2107. That the Party, even under actual war conditions, does not relinquish its grip upon its special formations becomes evident from the Decree of April 17, 1940, *ibid.*, 1940, 1, p. 659, which takes the jurisdiction over members of SS formations in the armed forces away from the court martials and transfers it to the SS Court in Munich.

its own court martials as one of the first rewards of the new order;<sup>48</sup> the industrial groups and chambers as well as the official organizations of the Food Estate can levy fines of their own; the Ministries of Finance and of Economics and the Price Commissioner also have been equipped with extensive powers to fine.<sup>49</sup> The latest newcomer in this list is the compulsory Labor Service. By decree of Nov. 17, 1940,<sup>50</sup> extensive penal powers, which for some time it had been exercising "illegally,"<sup>51</sup> were confirmed to it. This list of exemptions and penal privileges is not given merely for curiosity's sake. With the one exception of the penal privileges granted to the bureaucracy of the Ministries of Finance and Economics which allows powerful individuals to buy off their penalties without adverse publicity and thus make the business man prefer this kind of administrative jurisdiction to the general one of the criminal courts, this development appears as a death-warrant to individual rights.

The separation of functions between the employer and the coercive machinery of the state was one of the main guarantees of individual liberty in a society where an ever diminishing number of people controlled the means of production. This separation is swept aside when the organizations—Party, Army, Food Estate, Labor Service—on whose attitude depends the social existence of the individual, are able to bolster up their commands with a, so to speak, "company-owned" disciplinary and penal power. It is at this point that the inroads of the National Socialist machine into the daily life of the average citizen appear the most striking and that absence of an outside agency willing and able to sift the individual's grievances will bring the greatest moral and material hardship.

The repressive activities of this joint enterprise, officially called the Racial Community, are exercised by the already mentioned special agencies, by the so-called People's Court, the Special Courts, the regular criminal courts, and last but by no means least, by the party-dominated police. The police has a special and comprehensive jurisdiction: it may kill or imprison for an indeterminate time persons whom it thinks to be inimical to the people's welfare, without taking the trouble of handing them over to other agencies<sup>52</sup> for examination of the merits of the case. It may

<sup>48</sup>Statute of May 12, 1933, *ibid.*, 1933, 1, p. 264.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. K. Siegert, *Wirtschaftsstrafrecht*, Berlin 1939, and the Decree of April 6, 1940, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1940, 1, p. 610, regulating the procedure in regard to contraventions in the sphere of distribution.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1513.

<sup>51</sup>Cf. my article, *loc cit.*, p. 453, note 3.

<sup>52</sup>W. Best, "Die politische Polizei des Dritten Reiches," in *Deutsches Verwaltungsrecht*, Munich 1937, p. 417.



likewise apply the same technique after the other agencies have relinquished an accused person, either after he has served his time or has been acquitted. The latter does not happen too frequently—the rate of acquittals in the regular criminal courts has gone down from 13% in 1932 to 7% in the second quarter of 1940.<sup>53</sup> The procedures followed by the agencies of repression correspond in the highest degree to the already formulated principles of technical rationality. To attain the results desired by the government with the maximum speed and with the greatest possible degree of accuracy, criminal procedure, that part of the law that was the most formalized hitherto, now had to become its most formless one.<sup>54</sup> Careful preparation was sacrificed to speed, all possibilities for effective defense were abolished,<sup>55</sup> the functions of the judge, traditionally the central figure in a German criminal trial, completely receded behind those of the prosecutor, and, finally, the opportunities for an appeal were severely curtailed and often completely abolished in capital cases. The same technical calculation dominates the methods applied to the different categories of offenders. The substantive penal law has been equipped with a network of conceptions which with every succeeding legislative enactment become broader and less definite.<sup>56</sup> Within a framework sufficiently broad to include easily every supposed wrongdoer, the government has unlimited latitude to be lenient or brutal. It has shown the utmost leniency against the small fry in general and against every criminal in its own ranks. A most generous succession of general amnesties and general *nolle prosequi*, repeated fairly regularly every second year, was turned out to the benefit of the host of wrongdoers of little consequence, granting absolution of nearly every crime committed by overzealous party members.<sup>57</sup> Directed likewise by the desire to enrol as large as possible a number of racial comrades into the regular labor process, the government passed on November 17, 1939, and complemented in 1941, some enlightened rules which allow criminals, after a certain period, to

<sup>53</sup>*Wirtschaft und Statistik*, 1941, p. 247.

<sup>54</sup>Cf. the somewhat melancholic reflections of G. Dahm, "Richtermacht und Gerichtsverfassung," in *Zeitschrift für die gesamten Staatswissenschaften*, 101 (1941), p. 287.

<sup>55</sup>As regards the limitations set to the lawyer's representation of his client's interest, cf. the much publicized Groepke case, *Deutsches Recht*, 1941, p. 918.

<sup>56</sup>Cf. R. Freisler, "Rechtswahrer-Gedanken zum Kriegsjahr 1940," in *Deutsche Justiz*, 103 (1941), pp. 6, 17. Cf. also the Decree of September 7, 1939, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 1683, forbidding listening to foreign broadcasts, which penalizes the spreading of news which might weaken the power of resistance of the German people, with the comments in *Deutsches Recht*, 102 (1940), p. 1415.

<sup>57</sup>As regards the earlier amnesties cf. my article, *loc. cit.*, p. 457. A new amnesty has been granted at the beginning of the war by a decree of September 4, 1939, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 1753. No figures have been published, however, as to the effects of this amnesty.

pass as not previously convicted.<sup>58</sup> The same viewpoint has dominated for a long time the National Socialist attitude towards juvenile crime, where reformation long remained the official slogan. Still, in 1940, thanks to the combined efforts of the youth and the labor authorities, who were eager not to lose a single part of their most precious capital, labor power, fines and short term imprisonment for juvenile criminals were replaced by a special light and short form of detention.<sup>59</sup>

However, long before the beginning of the war this policy was overshadowed by the increasing brutality which became the rule against all those regarded as criminal enemies of the people at large. The number of enemies who did not find mercy continued to increase. In the beginning these comprised mainly habitual and professional criminals who were taken into preventive custody, as well as traitors who were believed to have menaced or to threaten to menace the internal and external security of the Reich. Soon this category of enemies of the people was extended to cover the new crime of "race defilement" and was applied to the ever increasing body of sex offenders, which seems to have arisen from the general brutalization of sexual morality. Now, after two years of war, the list of enemies of the people's community who have to be extirpated to protect the home front, comprises those perpetrating almost every type of criminal act if committed by means of violence<sup>60</sup> or as an exploitation of the state of war. It comprises, too, violations of the War Economy Decree of September 4, 1939.<sup>61</sup> In this connection the Führer claimed that in this war, for the first time in history, the principle by which the merchant made his gain, whereas the soldier died,<sup>62</sup> had lost its validity. As if to confirm this, the German newspapers are at present announcing the first death sentences for usury. But since Sec. 25,4 of the above-mentioned War Economy Decree

<sup>58</sup>*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 139, and the announcement in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, September 12, 1941. Cf. also M. Wachinger, "Die Wirkungen der Tilgung eines Strafvermerks," in *Deutsche Justiz*, 102 (1940), p. 863.

<sup>59</sup>Decree of October 4, 1940, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1940, 1, p. 1366. Cf. also Rietzsch, "Neuordnung des Jugendstrafrechts," in *Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 698. Contrast the Decree of October 4, 1939, *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 2000, which tends to deprive juveniles in the more serious cases of the privileges granted in the special juvenile jurisdictions.

<sup>60</sup>For an extensive interpretation of the term "weapon to cut and thrust" as including the use of the bare fist, cf. Stuttgart Special Court, February 1, 1940, *Deutsches Recht*, 1940, p. 441.

<sup>61</sup>*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, 1, p. 1609.

<sup>62</sup>Cf. "Bekanntmachungen über die Bekämpfung der Preistreiberei," Executive Decree of January 11, 1941, *Deutsche Justiz*, 103 (1941), pp. 110, 112, which contains detailed instructions as to the procedure to be followed in the case of offenders of the War Economy Decrees.

exempts cartel prices, it is obvious that the main war profiteers are in no actual danger of punishment. But as a means of popular oppression and general deterrence rather than of monopoly control the death penalty has become fairly widespread during the last two years. There are no accurate figures available. The published statistics, even if accepted as accurate, cover only the number of offenders convicted through the channels of the special and regular law courts, which probably means that they embrace only a small percentage of criminals liable to death penalty. For the sake of comparison, however, those figures are important in that they indicate a sharp increase in the use of the death penalty. In the following figures the number of convictions for murder is compared with that of death sentences in general. In 1937 the quarterly average of all convictions for murder, attempts at or participation in murder, was 45, as against a total of death sentences for all crimes, including murder, of 14; the quarterly average for 1939 begins to show an inverse ratio between murder convictions and death sentences, 34 murders as against 39 death sentences, and the known figures for the second quarter of 1940 show only 14 sentenced murderers, but 80 death sentences.<sup>63</sup> The death penalty thus covers a steadily widening range of so-called criminal behavior.

Relatively late German writers and officials have realized that the complete subjection of criminal law and procedure to the idea of technical rationality is bound to shatter completely the specific protective functions inherent in traditional law; and the hope is being expressed that it might be possible, after the war, to reconcile what we called Technical Rationality with somewhat enlarged protective devices and guarantees.<sup>64</sup> Yet, it stands to reason that a system of law which seeks to operate by technical rationality and which at the same time attempts partial retention of liberal guarantees—two mutually exclusive and incompatible objectives since they derive from different social systems—must soon exhaust itself. The social processes that have taken place under National Socialism provide the explanation of the changes which the legal system has undergone. The concentration of economic power which characterizes the social and political development of the Nazi regime crystallizes in the tendency towards preserving the institution of private property both in industrial and agricultural production, whilst abolishing the correlative to private property, the freedom of contract. In the con-

<sup>63</sup>*Wirtschaft und Statistik*, 1939, p. 553; 1940, p. 557, and 1941, p. 257.

<sup>64</sup>G. Dahm, *op. cit.*, and Hans Frank, "Die Aufgaben der Strafrechtserneuerung," in *Zeitschrift der Akademie für Deutsches Recht*, 1941, p. 25.



tract's place the administrative sanction now has become the *alter ego* of property itself. Equality of law and freedom of contract tended to secure protection to everyone who had acquired legal title to property. The new system of administrative property relations, while abolishing the general rules and uniform procedures, shifts the decision on what property titles may be validated to the monopoly-dominated group.

Within every power grouping, the position of those in control is enhanced through subordinating the individual member of the group to the omnipotence of the group hierarchy that acquires a relatively autonomous jurisdiction of its own. Thus, in the very structure of society the rights and privileges granted the individual in his own right are abolished. Intra-group conflicts in which the individual may fight for the preservation of his claims and legal titles become an arena of mere force collisions and the economically atomized individual becomes a mere object of domination by monopolistic group and estate machines. Simultaneously, legality, no longer serving as an armor to protect the individual, becomes null and void and dissolves into technical rationality which now is the foundation of the structure of legal institutions, of the legal apparatus and of the machine that applies them, the judiciary.

But then, no rights of the individual have to be preserved and maintained in spheres outside economic and political life either. Legal regulation of human relations, whether it be in the sphere of contractual relations, family life or criminal infractions becomes subject to demands of everyday necessities of the totalitarian regime without mediation or indirect transmission. Necessities of securing sufficient labor supply preside as directly over legislation on matrimony as they rule over criminal procedure and substantive criminal law. Where there is a labor shortage which must be overcome as soon as possible, no ethical considerations will influence the decision as to the status of marriage or divorce, and no stipulations of the criminal code will prevent the government from refraining to prosecute or from pardoning numerous offenders. At the same time, special categories of offenders will be outlawed and victimized to serve as mementos of the defenselessness of the atomized individual and of the omnipotence of the groups and machines that run the state with the assistance of a technicalized apparatus of law and law-enforcing.

The system of technical rationality as the foundation of law and legal practice has superseded any system for preservation of indi-

vidual rights and thus has definitely made law and legal practice an instrument of ruthless domination and oppression in the interest of those who control the main economic and political levers of social power. Never has the process of alienation between law and morality gone so far as in the society which allegedly has perfected the integration of those very conceptions.

## REVIEWS

### Philosophy

**Marcuse, Herbert, *Reason and Revolution*.** Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory. Oxford University Press. New York 1941. (431 pp.; \$3.75)

This book is an extremely valuable interpretation of Hegel's philosophy in its social and political significance and consequences and constitutes a monumental introduction to the method of socio-historical criticism, to the method of "critical theory" as developed by Max Horkheimer and the Institute of Social Research. It consists of two clearly distinguished parts, the first dealing with the foundation of Hegel's philosophy, the second with the rise of social theory in the post-Hegelian and anti-Hegelian philosophy from Schelling and Kierkegaard to Fascism and National Socialism; the main chapters of the second part deal with Marx and French and German positivism. The unity of the two sections lies in the unity of the movement which leads from Hegel's first writings in theology, philosophy and politics to the most recent forms of social theory, a movement which is basically influenced by Hegel either in its dependence on him or in its reaction against him.

Marcuse belongs to that group of important younger philosophers whose starting point is the post-Hegelian period of German intellectual history. While German classical philosophy was rediscovered by the generation to which this reviewer belongs, the younger group, whose philosophical education occurred in the period of world war and revolution, is in a process of rediscovering the post-classical development. For, in this period the ideological foundation of the great catastrophes of our contemporary history was laid. There is hardly a more important step in this rediscovery than Marcuse's book.

The main thesis with respect to Hegel is clearly expressed in the following statement: "Hegel's philosophy is indeed what the subsequent reaction termed it, a negative philosophy. It is originally motivated by the conviction that the given facts that appear to common sense as the positive index of truth are in reality the negation of truth, so that truth can only be established by their destruction. The driving force of the dialectical method lies in this critical conviction" (26). This interpretation of the dialectical method generally, and of Hegel's use of it in particular, links Hegel to the line of revolutionary rationalism, the first segment of which is represented by bourgeois Enlightenment, the second by proletarian socialism. Hegel becomes understandable as the bridge from Kant and the bourgeois revolution to Marx and the proletarian revolution, with critical dialectics serving as the main cable of that bridge. Even the fact that Hegel's philosophical development "concludes with the declaration that history has achieved the



reality of reason" (27) does not remove the critical and negative power of reason. But it is now directed against philosophy as such: "Philosophy reaches its end when it has formulated its view of a world in which reason is realized. . . . The truth now would require actual historical practice to fulfill it. . . . Critical thinking does not cease but assumes a new form. The efforts of reason devolve upon social theory and social practice" (28). This surprising proposition is carried through a precise examination of Hegel's writings from the earliest fragments to the pamphlet on the English reform bill. Equal emphasis is laid on the logical structure of Hegel's thought and on his social and political philosophy, while his interpretation of religion and art is somewhat neglected. It is very fortunate that Marcuse takes his main insights into the character of Hegel's thought from the early writings. For the life of Hegel's work pulsates in those earlier writings and not in the later completed system. Whoever is acquainted with Hegel's fragments and the earliest formulation of his system, including the several political pamphlets written before the *Phenomenology of Mind*, never can be impressed by the distorted picture of Hegel as the dogmatic philosopher of the Restoration, the adorer of the absolute state and the logical sophist, as he has been depicted by those who only know him superficially and not as he really was.

The negative, critical function of reason in Hegel's thought is demonstrated again and again. For, Hegel's "reason signifies the absolute annihilation of the common-sense world" (48). Everything is something other than it immediately is, and uniting itself with "its other" tends to fulfill the law of life and progress which is at the same time the law of thinking and being—the law first expressed in Aristotle's interpretation of being as a movement from potentiality to actuality (42). Applying this law to the social and political situation of his period, Hegel shows the contradictions within the German state, which was not a state, and within the process of labor in bourgeois society which is abstract and quantitative and deprives the individual of the products of his labor, making him dependent on an alien force against which he is powerless. Anticipating Marx's criticism of bourgeois society, Hegel says: "The value of labor decreases in the same proportion as the productivity of labor increases. . . . The faculties of the individual are infinitely restricted and the consciousness of the factory worker is degraded to the lowest degree of dullness" (79). The social system arising from abstract labor and quantitative exchange is "a vast system of communality and mutual interdependence, a moving life of the dead. This system moves hither and yon in a blind elementary way, and like a wild animal calls for strong permanent control and curbing" (79). From this the philosophy of the state is derived. A strong state is necessary in order to prevent the chaos implicit in the method of capitalistic production. The state has as its function the preservation of the freedom of the individual from the destructive forces of economic society. It is not the state as such that is adored, nor is totalitarian power given to it as in Fascism, but the state which incorporates reason, and only so far as it does so. Here lies the absolute contrast between Hegel and National Socialism.

"On the day of Hitler's ascent to power Hegel, so to speak, died" (419). This quotation from a National Socialist writer concludes the book, rightly denouncing the misjudgment of some Americans who make Hegel's theory of the state responsible for modern totalitarianism. "Hegel's philosophy was an integral part of the culture which authoritarianism had to overcome"

(411). This is not disproved by the fact that Hegel's own monarchic solution was not a solution at all, but a relapse into the irrational which the rational state was supposed to have overcome. It only shows that the contradictions of bourgeois reality lead to state absolutism if they are not overcome in themselves by revolution, the road from Hegel to Marx.

The second part deals (too briefly) with those people who represent the transition from philosophy to sociology. The extremely important thesis of this section is that the positive philosophy of the 19th century was an apologetic for the given socio-political reality, that the restoration in Europe obtained comfort from positivistic philosophers, and that positivistic arguments are used by the present day philosophers of reaction and Fascism. There are striking quotations from Comte, Stahl, and the Fascist pseudo-Hegelians in Italy which show that the lack of critical attitudes to any given reality, natural as well as historical, necessarily leads to the acceptance of the given social and political state of affairs and to the devaluation of the rational individual.

As one who agrees in all important points with Marcuse's book, I should like to make the following criticisms and suggestions. Firstly, the section on Hegel should be substantially enlarged by a full treatment of Hegel's philosophy of religion and an adequate treatment of his aesthetics. Even a critical social theory cannot avoid an "ultimate" in which its criticism is rooted because reason itself is rooted therein. Otherwise criticism itself becomes positivistic and contingent. And no successful revolution can be made without a group of people who—however critical they may be of any special religious symbol—believe that the "freedom of personality" is the meaning of existence and are ready to live and to die for this belief. The pervasive disappointment over the last revolutions demonstrates this irrefutably. Feuerbach is right in showing that there is wishful thinking in religion and Marx is right in showing that the bourgeois religion belongs to the whole of bourgeois ideology. But it is a wrong generalization, derived from a metaphysical materialism, to dismiss religion itself as ideology. The transformation of philosophy into critical theory does not imply such a consequence at all.

Secondly, I should suggest that the second part become a second volume. In its present form it is too short to substantiate fully the thesis that positivism is the philosophy of reaction. Above all, the difference between 18th and 19th century positivism is only indicated, not developed. This is a serious point because it would affect the main thesis. Is positivism as such or only a special type of positivism reactionary? Other points, such as the altogether too fragmentary discussion of Kierkegaard and of the struggle within the Hegelian school, may be mentioned in connection with the demand for the enlargement of this part. In the same connection I want to make the suggestion that the result of the interpretation of Hegel in the first part be related more strictly and extensively to the discussion of the second part.

These suggestions will show that the reviewer anticipates a second edition of Marcuse's book, or more exactly, a continuation of the important and far-reaching interpretations with which it has started.

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**Rickert, Heinrich,** *Unmittelbarkeit und Sinndeutung.* Aufsätze zur Ausgestaltung des Systems der Philosophie. J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck). Tübingen 1939. (xviii and 185 pp.; RM 8.00)

The essays collected in the present volume have, with one exception, appeared in the *Logos*. They are closely interconnected, constituting the prolegomena to the second volume of Rickert's system, which was never completed. They aim at a doctrine of the constitutive forms of the "intelligible" world, which means, for Rickert, the Kosmos of all the empirical subject matters of the cultural sciences. At the same time, they set forth his views on "prophysics," the *prima philosophia*. The treatise on the "knowledge of the intelligible world and the problem of metaphysics" is preceded by discussions on the First in philosophy, the immediately given, and the relationship of the latter to the "understandable," the last concept occupying the central position in the whole book. During his late period Rickert was apparently very strongly impressed by Dilthey, although he does not once mention his name. He expressly polemicalizes, however, against the "understanding" psychology and the doctrine of the "structural whole" (*Strukturzusammenhang*), trying to translate Dilthey's psychologism into a neo-Kantian theory of the objective spirit. The theme of the book is the problem of how a non-speculative knowledge of the objective spirit is possible.

The treatise on the "First in Philosophy" (*Vom Anfang der Philosophie*) is, in a certain sense, a counterpart to Husserl's *Méditations Cartésiennes*: "From a . . . psychological beginning which might vary greatly in character the critical thinker first tries to get at that which is absolutely certain in order to put it at the beginning of the system as the 'logically immediate.' So doing, he still has to leave undetermined that which is the beginning of the world or the ultimate ontological principle." (14) This comes very close to Husserl's method of reductions, the "phenomenological" reduction—which Rickert correctly characterizes as still a psychological one—and the "eidetic" reduction which is supposed to lead to that ultimate ontological principle. In Rickert's writing, Husserl's phenomenological residue bears the name "universal minimum." Both conceive the absolutely First as something that is "left over," as it were, as the profit of absolutely secure being which the philosopher can book after having written off the overhead of the categorical "work" of the mind. This minimum which, according to Rickert, is indifferent with regard to subject and object contains the postulate of the system and therewith the harmony of the world: ". . . from the very beginning philosophy takes it for granted that a structural totality of the world (*gliedertes Weltganzes*) exists, and to this extent one is justified in saying of philosophy that it is more full of presuppositions than any other science." (16) Philosophy is defined *a fortiori* as a system. The identity of subject and object is stipulated, and it is only if that identity is valid that being as a whole fits without any leftover within the residue, as implied in a "principle which links up all parts into a structural totality" (*loc. cit.*).

Rickert's sharp-wittedness comes to the fore in the discussion of the "universal minimum." The criticism of one idealist philosopher very often



hits the weak spots of another. Thus Rickert is superior to Husserl in essential elements of the analysis of the ego, however much he is his inferior as far as conceptual differentiations and concrete richness within the abstraction is concerned. He has a more drastic idea of subjectivity than Husserl. He knows that the correlate of the "act," of the "givenness," of everything that Husserl would label as a mere datum, is a man who "means," to whom something is given, who finds something. Paradoxically enough, it is this very insight which makes Rickert more clear-sighted against psychologism than the author of the *Logische Untersuchungen*. By "heterothetically" referring the immediately given to one's "own ego" he cannot any longer regard that ego as a mere form of organization of the data. The ego has to be added, to some extent independently, to everything objective and is therewith from the very beginning much more substantial than the ego is in Husserl's philosophy. This very substantiality, however, makes this ego fall victim to Rickert's critique. Starting from the ego as from "myself," Husserl sees the individual as unproblematical because the individual actually means nothing to him. Rickert, however, realizes that the "exceptional position therewith attributed to one's ego" (22) is accidental. His analysis of solipsism as the starting position of *prima philosophia* still shows traces of the great idealist tradition lost in phenomenology: "Why at the beginning of philosophy should I not think myself . . . alone with my ideas? . . . but everything depends on what is meant by 'alone' . . . alone means . . . as much as lonely, and this concept loses its meaning if one does not think of a community from which one has separated. It is precisely the ego that knows itself as alone, that is to say, as lonely, that must necessarily presuppose a community of other individuals coordinated to it by their being. There is not and cannot be a lonely ego qua 'world.'" (23) Rickert's insight goes even farther. He despises the easy way out, that of substituting the individual ego through a collective consciousness—in Husserl, "intersubjectivity." His *prima philosophia* leaves room for the experience of alienation: "We have an abundance of immediately given data of our consciousness which do not refer to persons and their interrelationships. Hence, even the content of a self-consciousness broadened into collective consciousness deteriorates into a mere particularity within the orbit of the immediately given." (25) He reaches the resolute formula that "we can never hope to penetrate from a mere piece of immediately certain data to the universal minimum." (25). Here, however, the movement of the concept slackens. Rickert is incapable of dissolving the belief in immediateness itself. The "abstract ego element" (*abstraktes Ichmoment*) of something which is utterly beyond objectification, which Rickert claims as the actual residuum, is indeed so abstract that it not only cannot be perceived as Rickert holds against phenomenology, but it cannot even be thought. With Rickert, too, the pure ego of idealism remains an impasse.

The transition from Rickert's *prima philosophia* to his theory of the "understandable" is made in the article "The Method of Philosophy and the Immediate," which is a critique of what Rickert calls "hyletic sensualism." This term covers every philosophic position which accepts only sensual elements as immediately given. Oddly enough, Rickert holds that Kant and Husserl also were guilty of such sensualism. Some misunderstandings are

involved at this point. Thus Husserl believes in a hyletic kernel of every knowledge but reckons the acts (*noeses*) as such, as well as the sensations, to be among the immediate data of consciousness. To be sure, he does not reckon among them the objects of the acts, that which is "meant" by them (*noemata*). These, however, are the things that matter to Rickert. Their totality coincides with his *mundus intelligibilis*. He takes over the object of the act with all its Husserlian characteristics, particularly the timelessness, but ignores Husserl's theory of act correlation and hypostatizes that which is "meant" by the act as an immediateness of its own. His uncritical attachment to the notion of immediateness leads to a confusion which is dispensed with only in the last sections of the book, in implicit contradiction with the middle section (Cf. also p. 89). Yet even this middle section contains some remarkable observations, notably that the historical is basically inaccessible to eidetic phenomenology (58). Almost Hegelian is the formulation against the "stream of experience" (*Erlebnisstrom*): "Without thinking a content to be the same content or within the form of identity . . . we cannot say anything about it at all. Even the idea of the 'stream' must presuppose identity in order to 'sublate' (*aufheben*) it afterwards." (67) The description of preobjective immediateness as a "state" (*Zustand*), however, betrays the limitation of this critical insight within the form Rickert gives it. In the identity of the state, the stream, the becoming, (*das Werdende*) freezes and Rickert's descriptive concept of "state" is seen to lack that potentiality of sublating itself (*sich selber aufzuheben*), the program of which he maintains.

The final essay puts the not quite humble question, "How can we achieve knowledge of the *mundus intelligibilis* in its proper being when we attempt as far as possible to distinguish it conceptually from the sensual world, and what place is taken in the whole of the world by the *kosmos noetos* thus grasped?" (114) The emptiness of any possible reply is prescribed by the nature of the question itself. Then comes a critique of the platonic doctrine of ideas. It is first arbitrarily transvaluated into a metaphysics of "understandable" being and afterwards rejected because of the transcendence of such a being. Rickert contrasts to it his own problematic "immediateness" of the intelligible. There follows a polemic against Dilthey, underscoring the objective spirit and playing off the timelessness of the *noemata* against the "psychological products" (*psychische Gebilde*): "We ought finally to learn fully to separate the psychological being of single individuals who perceive and understand from the content which is grasped through these, that which is perceived and understood, and which might go far beyond the psychological life of the individuals." (132) The chapter contains—one hardly believes one's eyes—a footnote about Proust, a rumor of whom has reached Rickert through E. R. Curtius. The novelist would have enjoyed the touching final passage of this reference: "Should poetry here precede science and show it new paths?" (134) In spite of such naiveties, however, Rickert still seems capable of some daring exploits. Thus he ascribes to the silent bodily world, as the bearer of understandable meanings, "language and face" (*Antlitz*). He maintains an objectivity of expression far beyond the range of human signs and reaches the conclusion "that the sensual material we need in order to find in it the matter of our knowledge of the intelligible world necessarily always must be allegorical." (147) The physiognomics of the objective spirit were not sung at the cradle of German neo-Kantianism. Such physiognomics

include genuine insights pertaining to the philosophy of language and music, for example, "that the poetic content of any structure of words that we call a poem is as little exhausted within the perceptible (that is to say within the sensuous representation of the meaning of the word) as the theoretical content of a scientific proposition." (149) This, incidentally, is the main idea of the significant but totally forgotten book by Theodore A. Meyer on the law of poetry (*Stilgesetz der Poesie*, 1901). Another example: "Particularly with regard to the sense of a melody the meaning of the individual tones show an analogous relation to the whole of the musical structure as the meaning of individual words do to the meaningful totality of a whole poem." (150) Put this together with Rickert's statement that music consists of tones "which do not enter as words" (*ibid.*) and you have implicit no less a conception than that of music as a non-intentional language *sui generis*. For the sake of such findings one is ready to forgive the fact that Rickert's theory of the intelligible finally evokes his theory of values, through the somewhat sad assertion that everything logically or aesthetically intelligible is either valuable or valueless.

What characterizes the strange book above all is the configuration of sagacity and weakness of thinking which is disclosed in it. Rickert has the merit of striving for precision and for unambiguity of concept within a realm which otherwise, under the title of "life," is the unprotected prey of chat. But again and again the formulations fall short of their aim either through emptiness or through obvious mistakes, as in the case of the "immediateness of the intelligible." There are objective reasons for this. Most of the arguments are belated auxiliary constructs for insights which cannot be "reduced" to basic facts but can only be won within theoretically explicit societal experiences. Hence Rickert's impotence. He either works with pseudo-deductions where nothing can be inferred from mere concepts, or he charges scientific induction with a task which it cannot possibly fulfill: "Hence in the realm of the intelligible, too, nothing is left to us but to attempt to come from the particular to the general. It ought not to be demonstrated expressly (!) that here, as in the sensuous world, we have to proceed towards a general that is more than relatively or conditionally general." (178) This demand falls back behind Kant. The impossibility of Rickert's system cannot be explained through the so-called irrationality of a life that itself is quite able to be permeated by reason. That impossibility has rational reasons of its own. The contradictions of "life" have taken possession of the concepts to such an extent that they are as little to be reconciled as life itself. The belief in their systematic reconcilability has become a mere superstition. To think the world as a unity, this thinking too much today, involves a thinking too little. Already, sharp-wittedness and weak-wittedness belong together.

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**Mises, Richard v.**, *Kleines Lehrbuch des Positivismus*, Einführung in die empiristische Wissenschaftsauffassung. W. P. van Stockum and Zoon. The Hague 1939 (xii and 467 pp.)

**Russell, Bertrand**, *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*. W. W. Norton & Co. New York 1940. (445 pp.; \$4.50)

Mises' book is a kind of official textbook of modern positivist doctrine covering all branches of science and philosophy. The first four sections deal with the foundations of the "exact theories" and merely restate the well-known position of the protagonists of "unified science." There are, however, some differences in shading: for example, there is less hostility to the *Schulphilosophie* and metaphysic than there is in the *Wiener Kreis*, and a remarkable restraint has been placed on the demand that all scientific propositions be derived from *Protokollsätze*. Moreover, Mises suggests that the division of propositions into *sinnvolle* and *sinnleere* be replaced by a division into *verbindbare* and *unverbindbare* ones.

The primary criterion of a scientific statement is that it conform to the generally recognized rules which govern the use of every-day language. Mises himself stresses the far-reaching implications of this criterion, stating that the rules specified "include all conventions which determine the relations between spoken (written) words and the experiences (*Erlebnisse*) coordinated with these words—no matter whether or not such conventions have ever been expressly formulated" (pp. 332f.). *Verbindbarkeit* thus means much more than compliance with certain grammatical or stylistical rules,—it means that the propositions in which the world is interpreted must *a priori* conform to the whole body of acknowledged experiences which these rules express and perpetuate. No wonder that hardly a single proposition of Hegel's dialectical logic meets with this standard of "truth."

There is, however, another standard and another form of theory accepted by positivism, that of "tautological" propositions. According to Mises, logic and mathematics, for example, consist of tautological propositions which are "valid independent of all experience" because they do not state anything about reality but are merely new forms (*Umformungen*) comprising arbitrarily fixed rules of language (definitions) (p. 117). A tautological system cannot be examined as to its truth or falsehood, but only as to its consistency and utility (*Zweckmässigkeit*) in the presentation of observable phenomena.

The debasement of cognition that is so clearly reflected in these formulations distinguishes all the general methodological utterances of modern positivism. Unable to fulfill its quest for certainty and security, positivist thought seeks refuge in tautological definitions and the fixed conventions of every-day language. It orients knowledge to the ideal of providing an adequate description of that which is. This might still pass for a correct description of the aim of knowledge, were it not for the simple fact that the standard of *Verbindbarkeit* forbids any formulation that is critical in a genuine philosophical sense. For example, the totality of "that which is" is such that its adequate description must renounce the standard of every day language—which is itself an integral part of this totality. If the ends and interests of men are distorted to such an extent that the distortion pervades all human relations (of thought as well as practice) in a given reality,

then its adequate description must be *unverbindbar* in exactly the sense repudiated by the positivists; it must be contradictory to the prevailing conventions rather than compliant with them. This does not imply that the statements of such a critical theory are meaningless, arbitrary, and beyond conceptual control. Their meaning is defined in the theoretical context in which they appear. The theoretical context reformulates the historical content which the fundamental ideas have taken in, applies it to the prevailing situation, and relates it to the concrete potentialities derived from the analysis of this situation. The context itself is essentially other than that of exact positivist theory, for (1) it centers around such human interests and relations as freedom, right, happiness, reason, subordinating all other spheres of intellectual activity to defining and realizing them, and (2) it takes every single phenomenon as part of a definite historical totality of human existence and analyses it with a view to the potentialities of this totality.

It is surprising to find that Mises himself points to the essential limitations of his demand for *Verbindbarkeit*. He draws attention to situations in which the quest for enlightenment encounters a prevailing language that "was not created for such a task and was utterly inappropriate to it" (p. 303). He cites the controversy between Heraclitus and the Eleatics and the consequent elaboration of the concept Being and Becoming. In such a situation, he says, the new insights are at first *unverbindbar*, and this quality might very well be the mark of their truth. We may add that this is exactly the situation in which every genuine philosophy finds itself. Philosophical questions originate from and express a conflict between new insights and the "general usage of language." The "new" insights, also, may well be old ones that have been forgotten and have degenerated in the existential relations which the "general usage" perpetuates. So far the methodological part of the book.

The last three sections are particularly significant because they present a summary of the positivist conception of the cultural sciences. Notwithstanding all efforts to do justice to such "inexact" objects as art, literature, religion and right, these sections are extremely barren and abstract. There is a constantly renewed attempt to show that no essential difference exists between the procedures of the exact theories on the one hand and of the theory of society, art, morals, and right on the other. The common-sense approach here yields insights like this: "the poet communicates experiences on vital relations between observable phenomena by using certain conventions which must be counted among the rules of language" (p. 335). And the author reproaches Hegel's metaphysic for offending against the limits of "good taste!" A religious system is defined as "certain complexes of interconnected statements which aim at ruling (*regeln*) the behavior of large human groups in a definite sense" (p. 405). These statements are so remote from the actual subject matter they claim to be treating that they surpass all *unverbindbare* propositions of metaphysics.

More important, however, is the author's complete helplessness in the field of the social sciences. Here again, Mises is primarily interested in showing that the social sciences have the same conceptual structure as the natural sciences, that the various social theories contradict each other, and that all decision must be left open for future experience and observation. He reproaches Neurath for not stating clearly enough that "propositions

which are contrary to those of Marx and Engels are just as admissible from the standpoint of scientific logic" (p. 286). Discussing law and morals, Mises raises the question whether actions can be approved that run counter to prevailing legal and moral norms and aim to change them by force. He holds the question to be *unverbindbar* insofar as it involves a moral evaluation.

The bare vestiges of philosophical problems that can still be traced in Mises' book have completely disappeared from *Russell's* study of meaning and truth, which deals neither with meaning nor with truth, the approach and concepts being such as to render the notion of meaning and truth inapplicable to the subject matter treated. The problem of truth arose in philosophy in connection with the most concrete questions and interests of human existence, and it has philosophical meaning only insofar as it is definitely related to them. It is meaningful to ask for the truth in the context of the quest for freedom, reason, justice, of a rational society, but it is entirely meaningless to investigate the truth of such statements as "this is a dog," "the snow is white," "I am hot," meaningless not because the analysis of language is not important for philosophy, but because it is much too important to be oriented to silly propositions emptied of all problems. Russell's analysis is concerned with dogs and cats, cheese, butter and bacon,  $p$ ,  $p^a$  and  $p^{a+1}$ . Frequently, however, human relationships, history and society enter the horizon of this "philosophy." For example, there is a lengthy discussion of the difference in meaning between the sentences "Brutus killed Caesar," and "Caesar killed Brutus," and the "ultimate source" of the distinction is found to be the difference between "x precedes y" and "y precedes x," where "x and y are events." There are such "decisive" problems as "if there were in New York an Eiffel Tower exactly like the one in Paris, would there be two Eiffel Towers, or one Eiffel Tower in two places?" There is the illuminating assertion that "we know that Caesar was murdered, but until this event occurred it was not known." And there is the warranted prediction that "if some one brings you, in the dark, into the neighborhood of a ripe Gorgonzola, and says, can't you smell roses? you will say no."

We do not think that we are unfair to Russell's book in selecting out these ridiculous illustrations. They indicate precisely the dimension in which his analysis proceeds. In its quest for certainty and security, positivism is compelled to formalize all propositions to such an extent that they either state nothing about reality (see R.v.Mises' thesis above) or state only things in which nobody is interested and which everybody knows anyway. The propositions cannot be disputed because all controversial content has been removed. The problem of meaning and truth, on the other hand, should begin only where there is a controversial matter, one on which no agreement can possibly be arrived at by going back to the "basic propositions" of the "object language." The problems of freedom, reason, justice cannot be discussed within a conceptual framework that centers around "basic propositions" because disagreement and the transcendence of sense-perception belong to their very essence. If meaning and truth are to be derived from statements such as "I am hot" or "this is red," then all philosophic statements are a priori meaningless and false.

The positivist reduction to "basic propositions" puts philosophic truth before the bar of common sense. Indeed, common sense plays an important



role in philosophy. Hegel, for example, has shown that if questioned in the appropriate manner, common sense itself yields the concepts that justify philosophy's going beyond sense-knowledge. The positivist appeal to such knowledge, on the other hand, stops short at the linguistic form of the statements of common sense and renounces the analysis of their content. Russell himself has shown the absurdity which results, in his brief but brilliant criticism of Neurath's doctrine (pp. 184f.).

Like von Mises' book, Russell's work contains insights which lead beyond the positivist position. His theory of a "hierarchy of languages," for example, starts from the fact (first formulated by Tarski) that "the words 'true' and 'false,' as applied to the sentences of a given language, always require another language, of higher order, for their adequate definition" (p. 75). Truth and falsehood really transcend all "given language" only insofar as they likewise transcend the given order of reality which this language expresses. No actual transcendence takes place when the truth of statements like "I am hot" or "this is a dog" are in question. The synthetic and linguistic difficulties implied in the question might easily be avoided by introducing a "higher" language, which in reality, however, is not other than the given language but a mere derivative of it. The case is quite different with respect to the truth of such propositions as "Freedom is the sole truth of Spirit" or "the realm of freedom begins beyond the realm of daily work." Such sentences are part of a language which is truly "beyond" the given, and they measure the given by standards that are essentially foreign to it. These standards cannot be reached, however, by constructing "higher" languages, and by removing the difficulties and contradictions that arise through a process of artificial formalization, terminating in an entirely consistent "scientific" language. The language to which judgments of truth and falsehood belong contains all the matters of fact indicated by the "given" language and all its inconsistencies and contradictions, but it comprehends them under the aspect of their transformation into another, more rational order. It is not the rationality reflected in the system of unified science but that which, in our days, motivates the struggle of men against authoritarian unification. The language of truth and falsehood is, in the last analysis, the language that bears witness to this struggle.

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**Ushenko, Andrew Paul**, *The Problems of Logic*. Princeton University Press. Princeton 1941. (225 pp.; \$2.75)

**Frye, Albert Myrton**, and **Albert William Levi**, *Rational Belief*, An Introduction to Logic. Harcourt, Brace & Co. New York 1941. (xiii and 482 pp.; \$2.75)

**Wood, Ledger**, *The Analysis of Knowledge*. Allen & Unwin. London 1940. (263 pp.; 12 s. 6 d.)

Ushenko's book is a cautious protest against the abusive claims of the purely "postulationalist" logic which identifies logical problems with those of linguistics, semantics, and mathematics. He emphasizes that "logical form is not co-extensive with the syntax of language" and that propositions have a definite "objective reference" to something that is not a word but a "thing," to a fact "outside discourse." Logic, in other words, is concerned with truth, and truth implies something "beyond convention," some agreement with an objective, "external reality." These are insights which constitute a remarkable achievement in the present-day discussion of logical problems. To be sure, Ushenko's position is at once faced with the old "paradox" that "there exists within discourse an objective for reference, the nature of which is to be something outside discourse," that logic comprises elements which "belong at once to conception and to external reality." His solution, in his own words, is a "revival, with essential differences, of the transcendental logic." The essential difference consists in his distinction between categories which have an "objective reference" and categories which are simply means or functions of "organizing thought." To him, the logical validity of the means of organizing thought in a proposition (the categories) is not in any way identical (as it was to Kant) with objective validity. This distinction makes it possible for Ushenko to reconcile transcendental logic with the decisive theses of modern formal logic, especially with the assumption that not concepts (terms) or judgments but propositions are the real units of logic, that concepts attain their logical validity only through their function in propositions, and that logical deduction depends on "formal properties" and not on "connotation." Then, of course, any transcendental deduction of categories and judgments is impossible, and Ushenko seeks the basis for the validity of logical forms in the pronouncement of "intuition," which provides a "direct apprehension of an exhibition of form." Apart from this attempt to formulate the objective foundations of logic, the book contains a thorough and critical analysis of the paradoxes and the most modern efforts to solve them.

While Ushenko's book is fully aware of the philosophical problematic of logic and of the philosophical implications involved in the scientific and mathematical formalization of it, Frye's and Levi's *Rational Belief* exemplifies the leveling down of all logical problems to the uses of an innocuous textbook. Theirs is a treatise in traditional logic with almost complete disregard of recent reformulations of the field. The task that remains unfulfilled is to restate this logic in its full historical and philosophical significance, and no attempt to perform it is made in the book under review. Instead, logic is harnessed to the authority of common sense,—a common sense, of course, which has taken in the refining achievements of modern science and technics. The authors treat logic as the study of rational

belief, and formulate the "law of rational belief" as follows: "Accept without qualification only true propositions; qualify the acceptance of any proposition that is only probably true by the measure, or sufficiency, of the reason for it." True propositions are either formal or material; the former are either self-evident or inferred, the latter must ultimately be justified by experience. Experience must be submitted to scientific method, the primary element of which is observation. This is the framework in which the classifications, distinctions, and laws of traditional logic are repeated, exemplified by nice, often amusing, stories, newspaper clippings, and anecdotes. The level of the discussion might be illustrated by two instances: in the paragraph headed "The Limitations of Sense Experience" one looks in vain for a treatment of the various philosophical criticisms of sense-knowledge, but one finds the statement that "the observer should have his physical condition, particularly his sense organs, tested,—an astronomer with bad eyesight or a particularly slow perceptual response should be aware of such defects." And the Socratic Method is held to be "simply a technique for the clarification of meaning, in which one clear-minded individual sets out to infer accurately the meanings hidden behind the actual assertion of one less clear-minded than himself."

Ushenko uses the referential or intentional thesis for a reformulation of logical problems; Ledger Wood applies the same thesis to a far-reaching epistemological analysis. His book may be characterized as a phenomenological investigation into the structure of knowledge. He begins with sensory knowledge and perception, then takes up memory, introspection and the knowledge of other selves, and ends with conceptual, formal and valuational knowledge. His analysis is guided by the principle that intentionality, meaning referential transcendence "beyond the immediate data of experience," is the essential feature of all knowledge. This implies a critique of positivistic and fictionalistic epistemology that is particularly fruitful in Wood's discussion of sensory knowledge. He recognizes that the sense data, "far from being the first in the order of knowledge, are the end-products of refined and subtle psychological analyses and philosophical abstractions." Spontaneous intellectual processes operate in apparently the most immediate modes of knowledge and terminate in the perception of "things": the "thing" is the result of a whole chain of syntheses which integrate inner- and intra-sensory qualities. The syntheses themselves are largely governed by imaginative and pragmatic factors. "Thinghood is no doubt a pragmatic category, but it is grounded in the structure of the phenomenally real."

One might expect that this view would open the way to an analysis of knowledge which follows out the "mediating processes" operative in perception and dissolves the positivistic abstractions into the unrestricted historical continuum of experience. This, however, is not the case. At best, Wood arrives at some *Gestalt* psychological corrections of positivistic epistemology. The trans-sensory factors which he recognizes as constitutive of experience do not go beyond certain elementary pragmatic or psychological processes (association of ideas, recognition) acknowledged even by the sensualists. He gives a quick critique of Kant's transcendental analytics, treats Hegel's dialectical logic with superior contempt, and eventually succumbs to the positivistic impoverishment of knowledge.

This becomes especially clear in Wood's discussion of conceptual and valuational knowledge. According to him, the universals to which concepts



refer are but "classes" of particulars, dependent upon the resemblance or similarity between the members of the class. True, "the object of the concept is not the bare particulars, but the particulars in their resemblance to one another." The concept is a "unique and unrepeatable mental event" which cannot be identically the same in two individuals. On the other hand, Wood admits that the concept is "not a bare psychological fact" but does possess constancy and identity of meaning in a multiplicity of individual intellectual acts. He explains this identity by the phenomenon of "multiple intent," by virtue of which numerically distinct concepts refer to one and the same intentional object. The phenomenon of multiple intent itself, however, although the "very heart and core of knowledge," is designated as a mere "fact," to be accepted as "an ultimate and unexplainable trait of consciousness." Concerning the formation of concepts, Wood gives a mere psychological interpretation: the conceptual synthesis is determined by the "law of recognition," and the behavior of the child who recognizes and names the toy which was taken away from him is held to exemplify the origin of conceptual thinking.

Wood's theory of conceptual knowledge denies the reality of universals in any form, a position which is greatly facilitated by the exclusion of all problems concerning the existence and structure of the external object of knowledge. Such "phenomenological reduction" seems today to play the same game as the fictionalism and nominalism which it was originally meant to overcome. Wood's theory of universal concepts lacks an adequate empirical foundation. He does not attempt to unfold the full structure of experience, an attempt which might have led him to see the missing experiential basis for universality as a historical phenomenon bound up with the situation of knowledge in a particular form of society. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, which links the development of conceptual universality to the historical development of human consciousness and practice, is much more empirical than Wood's epistemological analysis. The latter considers only the abstract epistemological subject in its contacts with other likewise abstract subjects; outside this sphere, the subject appears mainly as determined by custom, habit and the "moral sentiments of decent men." Wood's philosophy thus shows definite conformistic tendencies which bear their fruits in his discussion of valuational knowledge and culminates in the statement that moral ideals and principles "have no authority different from the rules of a game," say contract bridge, or, still better, from the postulates of a mathematical science. They are not true "in the strict sense"; "they are only posited in order that their logical implications may be elicited." These analogies are not meant to illuminate an actual state of affairs (in which case they may be very adequate descriptions) but the very structure of valuational knowledge.

In his concluding chapter, Wood presents a discussion of the meaning of truth which again combines the features characteristic of his whole study: on the one hand a criticism of current epistemological ideas that aims to go far, and on the other a surrender to these same ideas. Maintaining the definition that truth is a correspondence between the meaning of a proposition and a factual situation, Wood recognizes that "bare facts cannot be subsumed under or assimilated to pure meanings, and hence the fact which constitutes the verification or falsification of a propositional meaning is not a bare fact, but a fact suffused with conceptual meanings." Wood is thus at

the threshold of a theory which places the problem of verification into a critical context transcendent to the homogeneous continuum of logic. For, the conceptual meanings with which the facts are suffused point to the material as well as intellectual totality which constitutes experience. Wood does not follow up this lead, however. He replaces the "bare fact" by a "non-propositional meaning" which turns out to be "usually a perceptual meaning," referring to the "sensuous core of the percept itself." His anti-positivistic interpretation of verification thus comes to terms with the enemy.

Wood's book is rich in thorough phenomenological analyses in the field of epistemology and logic (see, for example, his critique of the doctrine of self-refuting propositions and of the various aprioristic theories) which are far above the level of current discussions. It is strange, however, that this work, which is so much indebted to the doctrines of the phenomenological school, refrains from any discussion or even mention of Husserl and of the even closer related epistemological studies of Wilhelm Schapp and Edith Landmann.

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### Psychology

**Fromm, Erich, *Escape from Freedom*.** Farrar and Rinehart. New York 1941. (xi and 305 pp.; \$2.50)

Much is being written on the subject of freedom in these days of struggle against the totalitarian powers who would like to suppress all freedom. The word is on many lips. Not always does it have meaning for those who use it and sometimes it is used to cover activities and thoughts designed to abolish freedom and democracy. It should give pause to think, then, that one as passionately and seriously interested in the cause of freedom as the author of this book finds himself compelled to call his most penetrating analysis of the role of freedom in modern man "Escape from Freedom."

Fromm's book presents a social and individual psychology from the point of view of freedom. His main thesis concerns the twofold aspect of freedom: on the one hand freedom means the liberation from those "primary bonds" which tied man to nature or which, in the clan or in feudal society, tied him to the authorities of society and to his fellow men from whom he is not yet set apart as an "individual." Such "freedom *from*" is not as yet a positive freedom ("freedom *to*"). Positive freedom, according to Fromm, "is identical with the full realization of the individual's potentialities, together with his ability to live actively and spontaneously." From the lag between the development of "freedom from" and "freedom to" crucial problems result which can be seen ontogenetically especially during infancy and childhood, and which are discussed historically for the period of the Reformation and for the crisis of the present era.

It is characteristic of both these historical periods that entire strata of a society shaken to its foundations by far-reaching social and economic changes attempt to escape their freedom from old ties that have been destroyed by these far-reaching changes.

In a remarkable analysis Fromm shows how Lutheranism and Calvinism appealed strongly to profound psychic needs and anxieties prevalent especially among the middle classes in the period of transition from the medieval to the modern economic form, and how these needs and anxieties were internalized as new attitudes that became powerful productive instrumentalities during the rise of capitalism. To give one instance of this type of analysis, the author points to Luther's and Calvin's emphasis on the worthlessness and impotence of the individual. They were touching upon a feeling deeply rooted among groups that were most sorely threatened by the insecurities attending the dissolution of the medieval guild system and the transformation of the feudal into the capitalist society. The feeling that one had no merits of his own but was merely a powerless tool in the hands of God was especially fostered by the Calvinistic dogma of predestination, according to which God's salvation of one man and his condemnation of another was nothing but God's way of showing His power. Such teachings deprived man of his



sense of dignity and prepared him "to accept a role in which his life became a means to purposes outside himself, those of economic productivity and accumulation of capital," whereas in medieval thought man's spiritual salvation and his spiritual aims had been the purpose of life.

There are a number of other very significant insights into the socio-psychological background of the Reformation. Space does not permit us to do more than mention a few which seemed most illuminating: the Calvinistic dogma of predestination is compared with production for the market (as opposed to the guild system); the quality of work in modern society is shown to be comparable to the compulsive activity with which some neurotics attempt to allay their fears, insecurity, and doubt; there is keen appraisal of the role of doubt and of the attempts to silence it.

The Reformation laid the foundation for the social character of modern man, the analysis of which is the central theme of the book. Fromm lays down a schema of various psychic "mechanisms of escape" employed by modern man to escape from the negative freedom which leaves him isolated and insecure, freed from the primary bonds which fettered his development, but which also gave him security. These mechanisms of escape are conceived as various attempts of the individual to cope with his aloneness and powerlessness in the face of an alienated and overwhelmingly powerful world. They are termed (1) authoritarianism (or the "symbiotic" solution which the sado-masochistic character seeks), (2) destructiveness, (3) withdrawal, (4) self-inflation, and (5) automaton-conformity. Of these Fromm believes withdrawal and self-inflation to be important only in severely pathological cases, hence culturally of small weight. One might question this especially for the mechanism of withdrawal, since the isolation of the individual, although a consequence of the modern social and economic process, is very much reinforced by the tendency of the individual to withdraw from others, to regard them with indifference, if not with suspicion and active hostility, and to live within the four walls of his self, his home, or his family, and to fear the "stranger," tendencies which are especially strong in the French and German lower middle class.<sup>1</sup>

The emphasis in Fromm's discussion of the mechanisms of escape rests on "authoritarianism" and "automaton conformity." Both are essential for an understanding of modern man in western civilization. While authoritarianism may be the more obvious phenomenon in the Fascist countries and automaton conformity of greater social importance in the democracies, especially in the United States, there can be no doubt that, regardless of the differences in political institutions and forms of government, both these mechanisms are powerful psychological forces in the social character of

<sup>1</sup>Fromm himself, in a recent lecture at a meeting of the American Institute for Psychoanalysis, has given a re-interpretation of the character-syndrome observed and described first by Freud and Karl Abraham as the "anal character." Of the three most important traits of the anal character, obstinacy, orderliness, and cleanliness, he has interpreted cleanliness as the attempt of the individual to avoid as dangerous all contact with the world around him, either by not touching it or, if he has to touch it, by eliminating all traces of such contact in the ritual of "cleansing" himself. If this, to my mind very convincing, interpretation is valid it would be a strong argument for the social significance of the mechanism of withdrawal, since the anal character, as Fromm has pointed out, is rather typical of the middle class (see his essay on "Die psychoanalytische Charakterologie und ihre Bedeutung für die Sozialpsychologie," in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Vol. I, 1932, pp. 253-277).

modern man, no matter whether they are accepted ideologically, as they are, partly, in the totalitarian states, or whether they form a contrast to the prevailing ideology.

In the discussion of authoritarianism Fromm has broadened his earlier studies on the authoritarian character<sup>1</sup> and has added new insights. Of these the emphasis on the symbiotic strivings of the sado-masochistic (or authoritarian) character is especially important. He shows that in both masochistic submission and sadistic domination the drive to escape aloneness by clinging to somebody else plays a major role. The essence of sadism is *not* destruction of its object (although sadism is frequently if not always linked with destructiveness) but the striving to wield absolute power over another being, a striving which needs the continued existence of the dominated being and which assumes its paramount strength when spontaneous relationships to others are crippled and the individual is confronted with the threat of aloneness.

The description and analysis of automaton conformity is perhaps the most important contribution of the book. Because of its tremendous social and psychological importance a brief historical digression may be permitted into a field which is little known and hardly ever mentioned today, but which seems to foreshadow the present-day development with which Fromm is concerned. The automaton, the mechanical machine toy patterned on animals and humans, was very much in vogue during the second part of the 17th and 18th centuries, especially in France and Germany.<sup>2</sup> Public fascination for it at that time was probably due to the fast growing importance of machinery in industry and to the progress of rational medicine (especially since Harvey's discovery of the pump action of the heart and of blood circulation). The automaton was a distorted expression of a rationalistic century's belief in the ultimate triumph of reason: man could do everything with machinery and could understand himself as clearly as a machine.<sup>3</sup> While the automaton was yet in vogue writers like E. T. A. Hoffmann,<sup>4</sup> Jean Paul,<sup>5</sup> and others were already aware of the social processes tending to transform men's personalities into machines functioning like the famous automatons which the public enjoyed so much. Fromm describes in detail, with telling examples drawn from the psychoanalytic exploration of individuals, the psychic processes which lead, usually early in childhood, to

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<sup>1</sup>*Studien über Autorität und Familie*, ed. Max Horkheimer, Sozialpsychologischer Teil, Felix Alcan, Paris 1936.

<sup>2</sup>While "robots" still belong to the standard exhibits of fairs and miracle shows they are only the cruder and more powerful descendents of the automaton, built to inspire a mixture of fearful admiration and feelings of superiority over the clumsy giant rather than enjoyment of an ingenious and intricate toy, and they cannot compare in mechanical perfection with the 18th century automaton. A scholarly descriptive catalogue and history of the automaton is given by Alfred Chapuis and Edouard Gélis, *Le Monde des Automates*, 2 vols., Paris 1927. The cultural history of these toys has still to be written and, no doubt, would yield most interesting results.

<sup>3</sup>In Lamettrie, *L'Homme machine*, 1750, this belief finds its classical expression.

<sup>4</sup>E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Der Sandmann* (Nachtstücke in Callot's Manier, 1. Teil), in which the automaton Olympia—of Tales of Hoffmann fame—satirically represents the classical "Débutante."

<sup>5</sup>*Der Maschinen-Mann nebst seinen Eigenschaften* (Auswahl aus des Teufels Papieren, Dritte Zusammenkunft, Chapter X) where the reader is told that he is the machine man (automaton) and the 18th century is derided as the era in which men were nothing but automatons, with the implication that the 19th century is no better.

the "loss of self" and the substitution of automaton conformity for the real self. This, he says, is "the solution that the majority of normal individuals find in modern society." They are what others expect them to be, especially what such anonymous forces as public opinion, the Joneses, the majority expect them to be. The hypnotic situation demonstrates in striking fashion the process which, socially, works in more subtle ways to a similar end. The individual ceases to think and feel his own thoughts and feelings, to make his own decisions, and instead thinks, feels, and acts as he is expected<sup>1</sup> or as a "well adapted person" should. Through the analysis of the automaton character and "loss of self," a criticism is implied of the highly problematical concept of adaptation or adjustment, a normative concept that usually goes unchallenged in spite of its ubiquitous use in present-day education, psychology, and psychiatry. Adaptation through loss of self produces the intense insecurity which drives men to submit to such authorities as seem to promise security and relief from doubt.

The psychological insights won through analysis of the meaning of freedom for modern man and of the mechanisms he employs to escape from negative freedom provide the instrument for a penetrating investigation of the psychology of Nazism. Hitler's character structure is used here as a typical example of those psychological traits, especially prominent in the German lower middle class, to which the Nazi ideology had such a strong appeal and which played a major role in molding the social character of the groups that furnished the mass support for Nazism.

The concluding chapter examines the role of freedom in democracy and points up the dangers which threaten democracy where people do not progress from "freedom from" to "freedom to." From the psychological viewpoint, these dangers lie especially in the abandonment of individuality in favor of automaton conformity, a state which prepares the individual not for fulfilling his self, his potentialities, and his happiness, but for accepting a leader and an ideology that promise to allay his insecurity, anxiety, and doubt. Positive freedom can be achieved only in a society which, on the basis of a planned economy, permits the individual to participate actively in the social process, to find a spontaneous relation, in love and work, to the world and to realize his individual self. The concept of spontaneity is thus established as focal for the psychological meaning of positive freedom.

An appendix on "Character and the Social Process" offers a short outline of the method of social psychology. Outlining the chief differences between Freud's and his own views on the psychology of man, Fromm develops the concept of the "social character" which is the key concept of the book. The social character is defined as the "essential nucleus of the character structure of most members of a group which has developed as the result of the basic experiences and mode of life common to that group." Its function for the individual is to "lead him to act according to what is necessary for him from a practical standpoint and also to give him satisfaction

<sup>1</sup>According to one of the best known present-day psychologists, N. Ach (as quoted in *German Psychological Warfare, Survey and Bibliography*, ed. Ladislav Farago, published by the Committee for National Morale, New York 1941, p. 14) "will is a habit of voluntary response to the command of the superior leader." This astonishing definition is taken from Ach's paper "Toward a more modern (!) study of will," read before the 1936 meeting of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychologie.



from his activity psychologically." Its social function is to internalize "external necessities and thus harness human energy for the task of a given economic and social system."

The social character is a result of the social process and is a productive force which in its turn influences this process. Incorporated in it, at every stage of historical development, are all the forces which have developed and shaped the character of man throughout history. Man's striving for freedom is part of his historical evolution and has become an inherent part of human nature which cannot be crushed and eliminated at will, but has become a historical force with a dynamism of its own. In unfolding the particular role that this force plays in modern man, in analyzing the psychological dialectics of freedom, Fromm has made a most outstanding and challenging contribution to the social and individual psychology of modern man.

ERNEST G. SCHACHTEL (New York).

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**Zachry, Caroline B.**, in collaboration with **Margaret Lighty**, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence*. D. Appleton Century Company. New York 1940. (xv and 563 pp.; \$3.00)

**Buhler, Charlotte**, *The Child and His Family*. Translated by Henry Beaumont. Harper & Brothers. New York 1939. (viii and 187 pp.; \$2.50)

The central problem in the wide expanse of present-day psychology appears to be a methodological one. Should psychology deal with an unlimited number of isolated functions and phenomena, or should mind be studied as an organic unity amidst a complex biological and social environment? Obviously, the methodological question covers two more fundamental issues: should the center of gravity in psychology again be shifted to the actual person? And if an organismic and personalistic (one would like to say realistic) view were adopted, how would it affect the present standards and procedures of psychology which are still built largely on an ideology derived from the natural sciences? It seems as if the present development would increasingly tend toward the qualitative, dynamic, organismic view. Scarcely a book is published which does not in some way react

to this trend and express it at the same time. The following books have been selected not only with regard to the sheer weight of their contribution to psychology, but also from the point of view that they may represent typical positions in the present transitory process. In the William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1937-38, Goldstein discussed what psychology can learn from the study of persons afflicted with diseases or lesions of the brain, at the same time outlining a system of psychology on a biological basis. Biology is now turning from the previous atomistic, predominantly quantitative approach to a new one, emphasizing the indivisible coherence and wholeness of the organism. This "holistic" approach which Goldstein has helped to develop, rests on the observation that organic functions observed in isolation appear different from what they actually are in the complexity of natural functioning. Every observation, therefore, has to be made in view of the total organism, following the scheme of "figure" and "background" set up by *Gestalt* psychology. Single functions can only be understood by taking into account the organism as a living unit, its developmental history, and its environment.

For the study of the human mind Goldstein believes that experiences derived from diseases and lesions of the brain are more helpful than those derived from the as yet controversial fields of neuroses and psychoses. Supported by rich case material, he demonstrates that persons with lesions of the brain exhibit behavior characteristic through "lack of grasp of the abstract, lack of an approach to imagined things, inability on the part of the patient to give himself an account of his own acting and thinking, inability to make a separation between the ego and the world, and lack of freedom." Two basic types of behavior can be distinguished on such grounds, the concrete and the abstract, of which the latter represents the highest and the essentially human capacity. Goldstein, however, does not believe that there are several basic instincts or drives. What may appear as a dualist or pluralist phenomenon can, in his opinion, be brought back to the one basic tendency of self-actualization, the essential moving force of the organism.

We can only point in passing to the great wealth of individual problems considered in his book. Of particular interest will be his analysis of the inadequacy of persons with lesions of the brain, his description of anxiety and of catastrophic behavior and his interpretation of the meaning of form and order in connection with the drive to expand.

Goldstein has demonstrated impressively the central significance of the ability to perform abstractions. In spite of his convincing argument, however, the question may be raised whether this concept has not been overstrained if it is to be used as one single principle to explain the essence of cognition and even more. At the same time, the very exposition of the topic of the book is, it would seem to be, of great importance. It may be an open question whether generalizations derived from this field can be extended to the entire breadth of individual and social psychology, as Goldstein seems to suggest. The concept of the organism itself one would wish more accurately defined, and similarly the principle of the "desire for self-actualization." But arguments which may be brought forward against certain factual positions should not obscure the merits of this book. The systematic criticism of atomism in biology, of the stimulus-response scheme

and of conditioned reflexes, as well as the implementation of comprehensive hypotheses, the characterization of the nature of the data in biology, the outline of a methodology of the biological sciences, are contributions of great significance.

While one may clearly say that Goldstein's psychology, despite the disagreement which some of its issues may evoke, is truly biological in spirit, the same can not be said about Milton Harrington's book. The title promises a viewpoint which can only be considered justified if "biological" is taken to characterize a frame of reference utterly mechanistic and atomistic, the functional aspects of which are named according to physiological terminology. It is a noteworthy feature in the cyclic transition from mechanistic to organismic concepts that after a conceptual framework modeled strictly according to physical images has proved no longer tenable, usually so-called physiological concepts for some time are to provide for an intermediate frame of reference. "We are still able," says Harrington, "to speak of thoughts, wishes, emotions as the causes of action, meaning, however, by these terms, not personified states of consciousness, but the physiological processes underlying the states of consciousness to which these terms may also be applied." In this sense he elaborates a psycho-physiology and psychopathology on the basis of a strict stimulus-response scheme of strongly mechanist character employing a strange mixture of neuro-physiological and psychological terms. None of the features that require man to be considered as a unique psychological being has a place in this system. With what remains one may be able to explain the functioning of a robot but not the autonomy of human existence.

The book by Pressey and his collaborators has two different purposes. It wants to help the reader better to understand other people and himself, and aims "to bring together such data about the determinative environment of human living, and such description of the entire sweep of the processes of maturing and decline in human life, as would give better understanding of life's problems." The socio-economic and cultural environment of modern life is outlined in the first part; the second gives the development of human life in its entire course, emphasizing adulthood and psychological changes which occur during this period. The third part treats "in very common-sense fashion" major problems of living such as efficiency and adjustment. "The attempt is to see the larger long-term problems of living, in their larger setting."

While presenting a vast material with great skill, Pressey and his collaborators do not attempt any new comprehensive view of the setting of life itself. The book is written predominantly from the standpoint of the group. Out of fourteen chapters only one is devoted to the individual, and the "new case study procedure" which is introduced here, does not compare favorably with the achievements of intensive clinical and personality studies in recent years. The aim of a total comprehension of life, such as is implied in the title and in the introduction, has not been maintained, as is clearly demonstrated by the authors' inattention to the dynamic constituents of personality. "In fact, emotion will be defined as disorganized response, occurring when the individual is frustrated or baffled. Emotion is like fever; it is evidence that the organism is not functioning in healthy fashion." This seems a rather amazing statement at a time when the basically dynamic character of mind



and personality finds increasing psychological recognition. Nor should the names and the impact of the work of Freud, of John Dollard, Karl Menninger and Henry A. Murray (to name only a few) be absent from a survey of life.

Heinz Werner's book is a translation extensively reworked and brought up to date by a thorough consideration of recent literature. The task of a genetic psychology is "to compare the results gained from work done in specialized fields, and from this comparison to derive developmental laws, generally applicable to mental life as a whole." Developmental psychology aims to grasp the structure or the pattern of each genetic level, and to establish the relationship of development between them. Each of these levels is an organic self-contained whole. Psychological events of whatever nature unfold and develop as they occur; thus they may run the whole gamut from primitive to more complex mental patterns, although the subject of these events allegedly dwells on the last and highest level only.

Building on an amazingly extensive information and on elaborate experimentation, Werner discusses in detail the sensori-motor, perceptual and affective organization of the primitive mind, primitive imagery, primitive notions of space and time, primitive action, primitive thought processes and finally the world and the personality of the primitive. His book impresses as one of the most genuinely interesting and important contributions to recent psychology. It systematically elaborates an aspect which should prove to be significant and promising; careful attention is given to phenomena which in the customary proceedings of psychology were mostly omitted until now, perhaps because they were thought to be slightly dubious, or all too puzzling, or just because they were overlooked. Yet they may be more revealing of essential features of personality and culture and the human mind at large than many of the problems which are pursued on the broad avenues of interest.

Zachry's book is the result of an extensive research project directed by the Commission on Secondary School Curriculum of the Progressive Education Association, set up in order to reconsider the entire area of secondary school education and to bring forth constructive suggestions as to its general scope and its individual fields and problems. The book gives a comprehensive account of emotional development from childhood to adulthood. Maturation imposes—in our time more than ever—the necessity to adjust individual development to the complex social and cultural reality. Thus, the primary function of the school is not seen as the training of the mind only, but as the well-planned guidance of this process of adjustment. Zachry's book has the outstanding merit that it gives a thorough account of human development from this point of view, appropriate to the purposes and needs of the teacher. In the inclusive and detailed discussion of the typical relations, modes of conduct and problems of adolescence, primary importance is given to the dynamic aspects which should emerge as the fundamental ones in any consideration of the personality as a whole.

Buhler's book describes an attempt to apply exact methods to the study of child-parent and sibling relations, and of the development of character among children. Seventeen upper middle class families with a total of thirty children were selected, their doings in every-day life observed and the observations recorded. The present study deals in detail only with eight of

these seventeen families. The total time devoted to each family was from seven to twenty-seven hours, mostly extended over a period of from two to three months. Activity centering around an object and consisting of various individual events was considered as an essential psychological unit. The events observed were ordered under a system of categories, such as situations in which parents approached their children, and *vice versa*; social situations, intercourse, play, biological situations, domestic situations, school and school work, outside world, etc. The inventory of intended purposes embraces the following:

Social: affection, social intercourse (conversation), unfriendliness.

Pedagogical:

- (a) On the part of the adult: instruction, guidance, consideration of the child;
- (b) On the part of the child: objective questions and statements, seeking permission or recognition, criticizing and influencing the adult, etc.

The means of establishing contacts are subdivided into

- (a) Greetings and affectionate approaches: simple greeting, kissing, embracing;
- (b) Non-verbal activities: bodily contact; adjusting, straightening, fixing; helping, cooperating; giving, offering, etc.

In this way contact situations and purposes, the role of individual household members, the reactions of parents and children were recorded and computed into numerous graphs and tables. The second part of the book is devoted to sibling relations which are quantitatively evaluated.

It is hard to say what purpose this book is to serve. If it was intended to introduce a new method, the small number of individuals observed over such an insignificantly short period of time would not be apt to prove much, quite apart from the argument which could be raised against the inadequacy of statistical methods. But if this book was designed as an intensive study of a few selected cases, it has to be said that there is simply not enough psychological substance in these specified accounts for demonstrating the complex dynamic structure of family situations. Incidents of family life can, no doubt, be described in terms of the compartmental system here set up for this purpose. Cut out of the flow of reality, they are naturally more palpable and can be tabulated and scored. The question is, on what grounds was just this divisional framework designed, instead of any other which would be equally possible. The study, introduced as a total comprehension of family situations, is very likely but an atomistic accumulation of somewhat artificial data which has almost entirely lost the dynamism of immediate and actual reality. Underlying this approach there seems to be an idea of the nature of family relationships which is scarcely tenable any longer. If the real forces of motivation should be grasped, a study such as this one could hardly satisfy itself with contacts studied as to their overt significance only, as it is claimed here.

FREDERICK WYATT (Cambridge, Mass.).

**Britt, Stuart Henderson**, *Social Psychology of Modern Life*. Farrar and Rinehart. New York 1941. (xviii and 562 pp.; \$3.75)

**Walton, Albert**, *The Fundamentals of Industrial Psychology*. McGraw-Hill Book Co. New York 1941. (xiii and 231 pp.; \$2.00)

**Brennan, Robert Edward**, *Thomistic Psychology*. Macmillan. New York 1941. (xxvi and 401 pp.; \$3.00)

Britt puts his methodological principle as follows: "In social psychology, . . . the primary consideration is not whether something is true which people believe to be true. The important thing is that whatever people believe to be true is true for them. It may make little difference psychologically whether myths or stereotyped beliefs have any real foundation. If the 'pictures in our heads' are believed by us to represent the world around us, then they are of the utmost psychological significance in determining the things we will do." Guided by this principle, Britt's social psychology casts aside all ideological glorifications and taboos and, with cynical frankness, describes not how men ought to be, but how they actually feel, think and live in the age of mass culture. Present-day existence emerges as a series of stereotyped performances, values and ideas, a life in which even the most personal and most sacred spheres of "individuality" are governed by the standards of efficiency, prestige and conformism. Britt thus uses his freedom from value judgments as a device for picturing the world as it is today. The final standard of behavior ruling that world is compliance with "normality," and normality is nothing but a "statistical concept," designating the "culturally sanctioned way of behavior." The traditional ideal of "personality" breaks down in this world, while the much vaunted rationality of modern man gives way to "infantile ways of thinking" and to the "automatic behavior" characteristic of the monopolistic era. "Non-conformity is punished"—this is the threat which drives the individual to identify himself wholesale with his "leaders" and to become an acquiescent member of the crowd. Education, personal as well as social, dwindles to instruction in compliance and to the learning of recognized rules of competition, the latter increasingly taking shape as collusion among the few most powerful groups. Standards of prestige permeate and shape the modes of sexual satisfaction and the religious attitudes. Contempt and hatred of the weaker, racial discrimination, cruelty and resentment are shown to be the social consequences of stereotyped frustration. The book draws extensively on past and present researches in all fields of theoretical and experimental psychology and is one of the most provocative and stimulating documents of contemporary social science. It is supplemented by a careful bibliography for each section.

Walton's book, a volume of the Industrial Series, is written for supervisors entrusted with the task of "getting the most out of the worker." It is written for the "enlightened supervisor," of course, the man who knows that the worker is more than an engine and who therefore takes account of humane and psychological factors. This reviewer is not interested here in the question whether the psychologically refined and streamlined form of "scientific management" discussed in the book yields a greater efficiency than the older forms; the book concerns him only insofar as it supplements



and illustrates, in the sphere of industrial labor, the findings of Britt's *Social Psychology*.

To Walton, as to Britt, the "personality" is nothing other than as it appears today: the "impression made on other people." Man is a compound of habits, and the development of the personality consists in learning and utilizing those abilities and qualities which make him a success at his job. Quite naturally, the personality thus becomes an object—the sum-total of responses expected by society from its willing members. "We have names for people who propose anything not customary, and the name lists them as public enemies." Nobody wants to be a public enemy. The elaboration of "dependable reaction patterns" becomes the prerequisite for success, while everything that transcends the realm of recognized efficiency becomes a taboo. The emphasis of the book lies on the means and methods the supervisor can use to promote and perpetuate dependable reaction patterns. The trend is definitely towards managerial "leadership." Among the means suggested to "increase the positive attractiveness" of work we find that of prying into the worker's personal affairs: "The leader should make it his business to learn a fact or two about every man working for him, a fact outside of the work he is doing in the shop or office. Every item of personal information so gained is a handle by which to lay hold of a man, whether he be above or below us in the organization." Reports on a number of tests show the great possibilities for increasing efficiency and output by "scientific" handling of rest periods, motions, and by separating groups of workers from the factory at large and segregating them in isolated rooms.—Walton makes his point perfectly clear: the treatment of man as a mere machine must give way to his treatment as a machine with human gadgets, to be skillfully handled by "enlightened" leaders.

Compared with the frightful actuality of the first two books, Brennan's study in *Thomistic Psychology* reads like a sorrow contemplation of something that since long has ceased to exist. This is certainly not the fault of Thomas Aquinas, nor of his commentator. Brennan's account of Thomas' doctrine of man is thorough and accurate, well organized and documented. He starts with an analysis of Aristotle's psychology and ends up by contrasting the methods and findings of Thomistic psychology with modern psychological and anthropological schools. He has made no attempt, however, to contrast the "eternal truths" of Thomistic psychology with the actual fate of man's nature in society. Society has not only neglected or forgotten but changed the nature of man and thereby changed the forms in which the eternal truths must be presented and realized. The mere repetition of the old forms will hardly help to reestablish their actuality.

HERBERT MARCUSE (Los Angeles).

## History

**Farrington, Benjamin**, *Science and Politics in the Ancient World*. Oxford University Press. New York 1940. (243 pp.; \$2.50)

**Nilsson, Martin P.**, *Greek Popular Religion*. Columbia University Press. New York 1940. (xviii and 116 pp.; \$2.50)

**Parke, H. W.**, *A History of the Delphic Oracle*. Basil Blackwell. Oxford 1939. (viii and 457 pp.; s 21/-)

Why did Greek science, with its tremendous beginnings among the Ionians of the sixth century B.C., ultimately surrender to the superstition and deadly authoritarianism of the Roman Empire and beyond? This question is the starting point of Farrington's beautifully and passionately written book. The answer lies neither in science nor in religion but in society. "The struggle between science and obscurantism," today as well as two thousand years ago, "is ultimately a political one" (p. 71). One major reason for the decay of Greek science was "its divorce from the productive activities of life which resulted from the prevalence of a slave economy."<sup>1</sup> The other—the theme of Farrington's book—is that the religion of the state necessarily "tended more and more to be transformed by the ruling-class into an instrument of mental oppression utterly incompatible with the spread of enlightenment" (pp. 164-5).

In the sixth century B.C., the Greek world was awakened by a "popular movement of enlightenment," the Ionian renaissance. Built upon bold physical speculation, it was revolutionary in its implications. Its greatest scientific achievements were the atomic theory and cosmology and Hippocratic medicine. "This period gave us for the first time in recorded history the picture of man behaving in a fully rational way in the face of nature . . . freed from the superstition of animism, serene in his willing subjection to the law" (p. 60).

The enlightenment was abortive, however. The stock explanation for its short life is to place the blame, in the words of Salomon Reinach, on "the admixture of minds emancipated, but few in number, with the ignorant and superstitious multitude." Nothing could be more completely wrong. One need only read the poems of Theognis and Pindar to see that not "the ignorant and superstitious multitude" but their economic and political masters were the champions of obscurantism. Pindar's great choral odes, commissioned by tyrants and land barons, celebrated the divine origin of the aristocracy, their hereditary virtues, their literally miraculous victories in the great games. "Natural philosophers," he said, "reap an ineffectual harvest from their wisdom." His divine patrons could not permit it to be otherwise.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. p. 121: "Its mainspring is curiosity, not service. To know was Aristotle's ambition, not to do."

While the Ionian philosophers were undermining the official myths, elsewhere in Greece men were challenging the political power of the aristocracy. With the achievement of political democracy in Athens in the fifth century B.C., the oligarchs found it all the more imperative to resist the onslaughts on the state cult, on the oracles and soothsayers, and on their underlying cosmology and epistemology. For Farrington, the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus is the symbol of the clash between the two conceptual worlds. Prometheus was punished for his *philanthropia*, his love of man expressed in the creation of applied science, above all, medicine. The agents of the retribution of Zeus, significantly, were Might and Violence. We do not know how Aeschylus resolved the conflict, for the second and third plays are lost, but Farrington argues that he sought a compromise. Others, like the philosopher Critias about whom we shall have more to say later, knew better than Aeschylus. Political power was potentially in the hands of the mass of citizens and there could therefore be no compromise with the Ionians if the oligarchs were to retain their *de facto* power.

Plato was the man who successfully turned the philosophic tide in favor of the aristocracy. "Haunted by the question of internal revolution," "so remote from any feeling of sympathy with the people or understanding of them, that he never thought except in terms of legislation, and the imposition of regulation from above" (p. 153), Plato placed at the heart of his system a rigid, all-embracing educational program built around a state-imposed dogma. More correctly we should speak of two curricula, one for the masses and one for the elite, with the study of nature deliberately excluded from both. With the aid of an iron censorship, Plato would impose a religion concocted out of the traditional Greek cults and the astral theology of the Chaldeans. The crucial point is that Plato did not himself believe in this theology and the arguments he adduced were intellectually and morally unworthy of him. Yet he did not shrink from this gigantic lie to preserve the state he thought ideal.

It was in conscious opposition to Plato that Cynicism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism appeared upon the scene. Stoicism, Farrington argues, began as a doctrine with socially revolutionary potentialities.<sup>1</sup> Against Plato, Zeno set forth the principles of an ideal Republic embracing all mankind, with laws prescribed by nature and not by convention, without class divisions, without images or temples, sacrifices or gymnasia. Like Cynicism, however, Stoicism had not "sufficiently analyzed the aristocratic philosophies to be able to offer effective resistance." Its supposed scientific foundation was a false one. Its astral theology, though "more imposing intellectually" than Plato's, opened the door to superstition. Man was turned away from the struggle with nature to a spirit of negativism and resignation. When Stoicism traveled to Rome in the second century B.C., it moved even further away from its early implications. Panaetius, Cicero, and Varro re-shaped it till it invested the "whole threatened system of oligarchic government with the authority of the new universal religion based on the doctrine of the divinity of the stars" (p. 199). That the last of the Stoics was the Emperor Marcus Aurelius is the crowning touch.

How different was the fate of Epicureanism. It was lied about, scorned, concealed and banned by the Roman state and its ideological spokesmen.

<sup>1</sup>He here follows J. Bidez, *La Cité du Monde et la Cité du Soleil* (1932) against the views of W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind* (1933).



Cicero, that paragon of all virtue, wrote to his brother Quintus in frank admiration of Lucretius and then said in the *Tusculan Disputations* some ten years later that he had never bothered to read any of the Latin Epicurean writings. Such barefaced lying stems from the same motives that permitted him to tear apart the sham of divination in one book and to say in another that "the institution and authority of augurs is of vital importance to the state."

What was it that Epicurus did, or rather tried to do through an organized popular movement of enlightenment? Farrington quotes the great nineteenth century French student of ethics, Constant Martha: "In expelling from nature the inept intervention of the gods of paganism, Epicurus also put an end to all those pious frauds by which men duped one another and duped themselves." A true knowledge of nature was his remedy for the evils of society, and choosing atomism as his starting point Epicurus picked up where the Ionians had stopped. "The knowledge of natural law," he wrote in an epigram which Farrington inscribes on the fly leaf of his book, "does not produce men given to idle boasting or prone to display the culture for which the many strive, but men of a haughty independence of mind who pride themselves on the goods proper to man, not his circumstances."

Such notions brought the wrath of the gods down upon Epicurus. Plutarch, always ready with a defense for official obscurantism, wrote: "Religion it is that constraineth and holdeth together all humane society, this is the foundation, prop, and stay of all laws, which the Epicureans subvert and overthrow directly." Epicurus was no atheist.<sup>1</sup> He was indeed subversive, however, of whatever could not withstand the scrutiny of scientific knowledge and scientific methods; of oracles and miracles, of astral theology, of the doctrine of divine intervention and distributive justice in the after-life.

Epicurus died in 270 B.C. His teachings spread widely and rapidly; even Cicero is witness to their popularity in Italy. Within a hundred years of his death the Roman Senate, guardian of the morals of the citizens, expelled two of his disciples from the city. In preserving freedom of superstition and obscurantism, says Farrington, the Senate and later the emperors sounded the death knell of ancient science.<sup>2</sup>

What Farrington has done, in short, is to present a searching analysis and brilliant interpretation of the unsuccessful struggle for "enlightenment" within the realm of formal philosophy. The full significance of this struggle and its outcome can be properly appreciated when we remember that in antiquity the philosopher was not buried in academic halls: remember the Pythagoreans in Southern Italy, Anaxagoras and Pericles, Plato and Dion of Syracuse, Aristotle and Alexander, Cicero, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius. Farrington's book is not without flaws, but before turning to them it will be instructive to see briefly how the material in Nilsson and Parke provides strong supporting evidence for Farrington's thesis and helps fill out the picture of Graeco-Roman culture. That Parke and Nilsson serve this purpose

<sup>1</sup>The evidence is presented somewhat more fully by Farrington in his article, "The Gods of Epicurus and the Roman State," *Modern Quarterly* (London), III (1938), 214-32.

<sup>2</sup>As further evidence of the fallacy of the masses vs. classes interpretation of the failure of the enlightenment, contrast the intellectual ostracism of Lucretius with the official position held by Virgil, poet of irrationalism, and by Livy, author of a history of Rome in which truth was subordinated to political expediency.

despite fundamentally opposed conceptions of the character of ancient religion and society is further tribute to Farrington.

What did the prevailing religious practices and beliefs of the non-intellectual, non-aristocratic Greek or Roman mean to him in his daily conduct, in his relations with the external world, natural and social? First of all, religion was omnipresent. "One could hardly have taken a step out of doors," Nilsson notes (p. 18), "without meeting a little shrine, a sacred enclosure, an image, a sacred stone, or a sacred tree. . . . This was the most persistent . . . form of Greek religion. It outlived the fall of the great gods." No action was taken, by the lowliest peasant or the mighty Senate, without prior consultation and appeasement of one or more of the countless gods, demons, and heroes. Their form varied from locality to locality and from time to time. Their individual fortunes showed various cyclical movements. None but a handful of professional experts could keep the catalogue in even a semblance of order. That was all unimportant, however, so long as everyone went through the proper motions and believed (or, in the case of a Cicero, pretended to believe).

The story of the Delphic oracle is characteristic. From its untraceable beginnings in the second millenium B.C., Delphi rose to such a position of prominence that its name is still synonymous with prophecy wherever men read. For over a thousand years it was consulted by Greeks from every community and even by the elect of the non-Greeks, by kings and tyrants, cities and private citizens (if they could afford the cost of the trip and of sacrifices and gifts to the god). The founding of colonies, the declaration of war, plagues and droughts, business ventures and illness brought men in droves to the little community north of the Corinthian Gulf, where there flourished one of the greatest devices ever created for the mystification and defrauding of the people.

The secret of the oracle was really very simple: "crooked and ambiguous" utterances, Aeschylus called them. In the political field, as Parke shows by a detailed study of every response known to us, whether real or fictional, "the Delphians were always opportunists . . . their political attitude rather adapted itself to circumstances than attempted to force a way through them" (p. 430). Delphi supported the tyrants when they were in power, condemned them after they were overthrown. It counseled non-resistance to Persia when all of northern Greece was medizing, and then, after Persia had been defeated, invented tales of how it had resisted the invader. Questions about local cult practice were usually answered in accordance with the custom of the city in question. Only when there was strong popular pressure for some religious innovation, as in the case of the god Dionysus, did Delphi depart from its traditional "conservatism" in religion.

By attributing "this equivocal and time-serving attitude" to the military weakness of Delphi, Parke misses the essential point. The strength and prestige of the oracle was the work not of the Delphians but of the rulers of all Greece. Many Greek cities, especially the important ones like Sparta and Athens, maintained "sacred ambassadors" or liaison officials with Delphi. Their kings, tyrants, and aristocrats made a point of frequent consultation. Their ideologists spread its fame in drama and story, inventing oracles where none existed, explaining away where the priests had guessed badly or had maintained a damaging silence. It would be naive to assume

—if we did not have ample evidence to the contrary—that they went to Delphi for advice. They went because it was important, in the long run interests of their form of social organization, that the hand of the gods be ever visible on the right side; and because, once having elevated Delphi as they had, they could not safely neglect so powerful an instrument.

The very lack of a consistent social and political program was the strength and not the weakness of Delphi. In the same way, as Nilsson correctly states (p. 63), the persistence of the Eleusinian mysteries can be attributed to the absence of dogma apart from "some simple fundamental ideas about life and death" which "every age might interpret according to its own propensities." The non-existence of a priestly caste and of elaborate theological dogma is customarily cited as the great advance made by the Greeks over the peoples of the ancient Orient toward a rational and free society. That is much too simple a formulation. Though elements of enlightenment were inherent in the step from Oriental to Graeco-Roman religion and the potentialities can be clearly seen, in the Greek tragedians for example, these elements soon became perverted into their opposite. The emptiness of content became a force of obscurantism. Not only was classical religion not an agency of popular enlightenment, it was able to adapt itself to every shift in state and society and all the more successfully prevent the spread of enlightenment. Not *what* one believed but *that* one believed was the concern of the oligarchs of every age and land.

Several factors tend to mislead the modern student. The literature of antiquity, and especially its prose, requires careful correction in all matters of belief and ideology. Not only was this literature a monopoly in production of the members and proteges of the aristocracy but, with the notable exception of the drama, its audience was restricted to the same narrow circle. Though no statistics are available, there is ample evidence that the great bulk of the population was illiterate. The step from mere literacy, furthermore, to the reading of Plato is a long one, and what passed for a book trade was pitifully primitive.<sup>1</sup> It thus becomes easy to understand the frank and almost naive cynicism with which ancient writers—confident in the solidarity and discretion of the aristocratic intellectuals—revealed the motives and mechanisms of the manipulation of symbols and superstition.

"When the laws hindered indeed wrongful works done by open violence," wrote the philosopher Critias in the fifth century B.C., "but man continued to do them by stealth, some shrewd and wise-thoughted man found an object of awe for mortals. . . . Whence he brought in the divinity. . . . By this discourse he introduced the most welcome of teachings, hiding the truth behind a false story."<sup>2</sup> Critias was a leading member of the Socratic circle, an active political figure in Athens, and the leader of the brutal oligarchic coup at the end of the Peloponnesian War known as the Thirty Tyrants. His cynical theory of the genesis of religion found frequent echo in ancient writings. They were praised by Polybius, one of the keenest political commentators of antiquity, as the foundation of Roman power (VI 56):

<sup>1</sup>See the account in chapter 4 of Wilhelm Schubart, *Das Buch bei den Griechen und Römern* (2nd. ed., Berlin and Leipzig, 1921), all the more significant because Schubart tries desperately to magnify the extent of book publishing and circulation.

<sup>2</sup>But for Nilsson, the historian of Greek religion, "The fate of religion is determined by the masses" (p. 4).



"I will venture the assertion that what the rest of mankind derides is the foundation of Roman greatness, namely superstition. This element has been introduced into every aspect of their private and public life, with every artifice to awe the imagination, in a degree which could not be improved upon. . . . It was not for nothing, but with deliberate design, that the men of old introduced to the masses notions about the gods and views on the after-life. The folly and heedlessness are ours, who seek to dispel such illusions."

The validity of such a theory of the genesis of religion need not concern us now. What is important is the insight into the deliberate manipulation of rites and superstitions in the interest of oligarchic rule, and the clarity with which it is stated. What Critias and Polybius approved without qualification, furthermore, was not a program to be realized at some future date but a well established practice of long standing. Yet in the face of such evidence, Nilsson perverts the whole relationship between ancient religion and society when he writes (p. 111): "Superstition is very seldom mentioned in the literature of the period simply because great writers found such base things not worth mentioning."<sup>1</sup> Not the quantitative frequency of mention but the framework of analysis is crucial.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, what of the mass of materials about the oracles to be found even in the "great writers"? Or would Nilsson distinguish between "base" superstition and some other kind?

A second major source of error lies in the fact that Athens virtually monopolized Greek cultural production during the two peak centuries, the fifth and fourth B. C. Just at that time, Athens, with its relatively high degree of urbanization, its exceptional political democracy, and its empire, was atypical. The normal forms of social conflict in the pre-Alexandrian Greek world—demands for land distribution, frequent exile and massacre of opposing social and political groupings, petty wars—were absent from the city of Herodotus and Thucydides, the playwrights, Xenophon and the orators, Socrates and Plato. Instead we find a much more subtle and opaque form of conflict, a series of ideological struggles that all too easily concealed the underlying cleavages.

Take the "cult of the peasant" as a significant illustration. Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, to name the three most obvious examples, never tired of glorifying the virtues of rustic life. Yet Xenophon, as Max Weber pointed out, "knew little more about the technique of agriculture than a Prussian officer who takes over a *Rittergut*." Aristophanes' peasant heroes were boorish, stupid, dirty, and altogether unpleasant fellows. And Plato was a man of great inherited wealth who never milked a goat.

Then why the cult of the peasant, in some respects comparable to the hypocritical nineteenth century English lamentations over the disappearance

<sup>1</sup>Nilsson disposes of the Polybius passage very simply: "this is philosophy and must be passed over in an exposition of popular religion" (p. 135).

<sup>2</sup>The evidence from the plastic arts deserves separate study. We are accustomed to thinking of written works in the millions of copies on the one hand, and of millions of dollars worth of works of art buried by Mr. Hearst in a Bronx warehouse until his personal financial situation brings them out into the light of Gimbel's department store. In antiquity, on the other hand, the fine arts were for public consumption as the art of writing was private and limited. The monopoly enjoyed by religious themes in sculpture, both in its autonomous and architectural forms, is well known.

of the yeomanry, whose great virtues were discovered only after they had been forcibly uprooted by the enclosure movement? In the 150 years after Solon, the Athenians broke the political stranglehold of the landed aristocrats and transferred the power to the growing urban population under the leadership of men of wealth. Not the least important factor in this process was the "democratization" of religion through the admission of the lower classes to the phratries, the introduction and elaboration of the great national religious festivals, and the granting of decision in sacral matters to the popular assembly. For a brief period, when the spoils of empire financed the democracy and supported the poor, things were relatively quiet. Then came the outbreak of the decisive war with Sparta and the rapid disintegration of the Athenian empire. The urban masses became restive and their possession of legal and political rights made this restlessness a real menace to the men of privilege and power.

It was at this point that the glorification of the peasant entered in earnest. The Athenian peasant had never participated in any vital sense in the political life of the community. He was not being "led astray" by the radical religious and ethical ideas of an Anaxagoras or a Euripides. The poverty and hardship of his daily struggle for existence exemplified man's subservience to omnipotent nature; he was the living symbol of the folly of the natural philosophers who thought that man could explain, and therefore triumph over, nature. He was, in short, as the first three chapters of Nilsson's book show conclusively, still the pliant victim of the authoritarian obscurantism of the earlier age, the true bulwark of society in the eyes of the aristocratic ideologists, and an object of contempt at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

In knowledge of the details of Greek religion and mythology, Nilsson probably has no superior and his book is a useful collection of materials. That it is no more (and sometimes even less), while Farrington has made one of the important contributions of our generation to the understanding of ancient society, must be attributed solely to basic theoretical considerations. Nilsson conceives society as an aggregate of semi-autonomous spheres: masses and elites, males and females, religion and politics, each following its own inexorable laws of motion. That is why he so frequently resorts to meaningless verbiage in lieu of explanation: "it was only natural" that women "should apply to divinities of their own sex" (p. 15); the "Greeks were too sensible to push legalism to the bitter end" (p. 107).

Neither Nilsson nor Farrington does more than suggest the precise historical background of any particular religious phenomenon or movement. For the former it is unnecessary to do more. What little he does offer is no better than the mechanical conditions-were-better, society-was-degenerating approach. Farrington, on the other hand, has a firm grasp of the total societal complex. It is the idealist Nilsson, and not the materialist Farrington, significantly enough, who offers the most vulgar materialist analyses on occasion (p. 87, for example).

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<sup>1</sup>The cult of the peasant is thus different from, though in some ways analogous to, the glorification of the noble savage. For full illustrations of the latter in antiquity, see A. O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1935), Chap. XI. The prevalence of parallel formulations in Rome is obvious to anyone who has read Virgil.

It is unfortunate, particularly for the non-expert reader, that Farrington did not draw the historical and social picture more fully. In three major places, he would thereby have deepened his analysis considerably and, I think, made certain corrections. One is the case of Plato. Farrington admittedly presents but one side of Plato's philosophy, that aspect dealing with religion, science, and the state. But error is unavoidable when such a man is discussed piecemeal. Plato, somewhat like Hegel, developed a reactionary social philosophy through a series of concepts which were devastatingly critical of the society of his time and which transcended the limits of that society at several crucial points.<sup>1</sup> Did any other ancient thinker, Epicurus included, expose the roots of social conflict and decay in the Greek city-state more mercilessly? I think not. Aristotle's critique of the *Republic* should be sufficient evidence.

That Plato could not carry his criticism to another end was not his weakness but the consequence of his having been born an aristocrat in fifth century Athens. This is no matter of simple class bias, for nowhere in antiquity did either the slaves or the free poor develop a genuinely forward-looking social theory. Given the existing social relationships, there was no new system of society to which they could strive. Hence the social revolts were either attempts to run away (on the part of the slaves), to decrease the crushing burden of taxes and debts, to reestablish the grinding poverty of the small peasant as the universal way of life, or to elevate the lower class citizens to the aristocratic level of non-productive affluence (at the expense of the wealthy and to the exclusion of the slaves). Theory was equally sterile. The social philosophy of the "left wing" Socratics, Cynicism, was the emptiest kind of negativism, symbolized by the pitiful figure of Diogenes and his barrel.<sup>2</sup>

In what sense then can Epicurus be considered a "revolutionary" thinker? Neither the available evidence from his works nor the whole concept of the Garden reveals a revolutionary social philosophy. Epicurus seems far less concerned with immediate social issues than Plato. His whole emphasis is on the achievement of a proper knowledge of the natural world, with its corollary, the elimination of the network of obscurantism and irrationalism with which the people were tied to traditional cults and beliefs. "The principal disturbance in the minds of men," he wrote in the *Letter to Herodotus*, "arises because they think that these external bodies are blessed and immortal . . . and because they are always expecting or imagining some everlasting misery, such as is depicted in legends, or even fear the loss of feeling in death as though it would concern them themselves." Precisely because there could be no genuinely revolutionary social theory in antiquity, the most bitter accusations of Plato or the Cynics were harmless to the oligarchs, even helpful in many respects, whereas the materialist natural philosophy of

<sup>1</sup>The critical effects of Hegel's philosophy were summed up by the emperor Frederick William IV of Prussia when he commissioned Schlegel to "destroy the dragon seed" of Hegelianism. See Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (New York, 1941), a book which offers many valuable insights for our problem even though it deals only with nineteenth and twentieth century thought.

<sup>2</sup>See the brilliant analysis by Robert Eisler in his short article in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, IV, 680-5. As other illustrations, note the primitivism and the ambivalent attitude towards wealth in the poetry of Hesiod, or the other-worldly maxims of the New Testament.



Epicurus was a recognized threat. His audience was wide and ever increasing. From him and his disciples they acquired disrespect for the gods and for their earthly representatives. A major prop in the defense of the existing property and power relationships was thus being undermined. What else could the Roman Senate do but expel and distort? It is of course highly doubtful, to say the least, that Epicurus thought of himself as a revolutionary in society. Although Farrington warns against any possible misinterpretation on this score, his book fails to bring out with sufficient clarity the reasons why this philosophy alone was a genuine threat to the established order, reasons I have tried to indicate briefly and rather schematically.

Farrington's third omission of importance is in his treatment of the Hellenistic world. Neither Stoicism nor Epicureanism can be properly understood without a fuller view of the profound changes that occurred in the Greek-speaking world when the city-state was displaced as the center of economic, political, and cultural life by the great monarchies of the Ptolemies and Seleucids. It is not enough to say that Stoicism and Epicureanism led the counter-attack against Plato by discarding the narrow horizon of the city-state. It was in the Hellenistic world, after all, that ancient science came closest to a genuine link with the productive system—only to fail to achieve it outside of the military and maritime spheres.<sup>1</sup>

Ionian science failed not only to bring popular enlightenment; it even failed to survive. In our world, the conflict between science and obscurantism, equally a political issue, has reached levels and brought forth implications inconceivable in the world of Plato and Epicurus. In the nineteenth century Darwinism was reviled and banned like Epicureanism two thousand years before. The parallel stops there, however, for Darwinism has survived. The difference in the fate of the two schools of scientific thought is the difference in the two systems of social organization. "In our modern world," Farrington writes in explanation (pp. 26-7), "the question of the dissemination of scientific knowledge among the people at large assumes a different aspect from that which it presented in antiquity . . . without a wide dissemination of technical knowledge modern society is unworkable. . . . But in the world of Classical Antiquity, though there was an analogous situation, it had recognizable differences. The machine age had not come. . . . There was therefore no problem to be solved of combining technical training with political incompetence. The problem was the simpler one of disseminating such ideas as would make the unjust distribution of the rewards and toils of life seem a necessary part of the eternal constitution of things, and of suppressing such ideas as might lead to criticism of this view of the universe."<sup>2</sup>

M. I. FINKELSTEIN (New York).

<sup>1</sup>See Farrington's own discussion in his article, "Prometheus Bound: Government and Science in Classical Antiquity," *Science and Society*, II (1933), 435-47. This article and the one cited above are valuable complements to the book and they help fill out certain points.

<sup>2</sup>Today one aspect of this problem, the technical needs of mechanized total warfare, has particular interest. For one illustration of the complicated social consequences see the somewhat romanticized account of the first British tank corps of World War I in Tom Wintringham, *Armies of Freeman* (London, 1940), chap. VII.

**Michell, H.,** *The Economics of Ancient Greece*. The Macmillan Company. New York 1940. (XI and 415 pp.; \$4.00)

Of all the names in Greek literature, none is more thoroughly undeserving of his reputation than Isocrates. An orator who never delivered a speech, a political "thinker" who played no great role in politics, Isocrates acquired wealth and fame because he was phrasemaker for the ruling forces of a society in decay. He, perhaps better than any of his contemporaries, knew how to wring all the real meaning out of the great ideal concepts of Athenian democracy and rattle the bare bones that remained in the unholy cause of oligarchy and plunder.

It is significant that Michell begins his final page with a long passage from one of Isocrates' tirades against the "demagogues." "I marvel," says the orator, "that you cannot see at once that no class is so inimical to the people as our depraved orators and demagogues." Michell then suggests that though "it would, perhaps, be going a little too far" to find the "whole explanation" for the breakdown of Classical Greece here, "it is perfectly clear that the chance for currying favor with the irresponsible masses by offering them the means of plundering the rich was in Greece, as it is today, the best policy for the demagogues." As his concluding sentence, he chooses a quotation from Andreades, until his death a leading economic theorist of the Metaxas regime, to the effect that the system of public finance was the "real cause" of the destruction of the city-state. Four hundred pages earlier Michell had already laid bare the essence of this theory (p. 37): "Greek democracy was unequal to the task of ruling and destroyed itself in its own weakness."

There is nothing particularly new in this use of the "demagogue"—but another name for the democracy—as the scapegoat of Greek history. Nor is there anything else particularly new in the book. Essentially it is not an analysis of Greek economics at all, but a rather meandering exposition of the technical details of agronomy and navigation, price and population figures, metallurgy and handicraft, very much in the tradition of mid-nineteenth century German handbooks of antiquities. As such it is welcome. It is reasonably accurate and well-documented, simply organized and not too difficult to read. Like its predecessors, it shows no regard for the dynamics of economic life and no particular concern for the whys and wherefores.

The mere march of time, however, has lent new meaning to Michell's statement of the traditional indictments of Greek society. The moment he steps away from the technical details of sheep raising, pottery, and silver mining, Michell sermonizes. On the very first page he suggests that the "actions and policies" of the Greeks "are such as to baffle our theories and defeat our sympathies," and he finds it necessary to issue repeated warnings against being "unfair" to them. He must make a conscious effort to overcome his revulsion at institutions like slavery, which "shocks our susceptibilities and outrages our finer feelings" (p. 150). That is a creditable effort but it leads to nothing more than a zero; objectivity cancels out the finer feelings. Michell offers neither an adequate study of the ethical consequences of slavery nor even an inadequate analysis of its economic consequences.

Only at the very end of his 20-page discussion does he suggest that "Greek civilization itself was based upon and made possible by slavery"—in a footnote that catches the reader entirely unprepared and leaves him untouched.

And always there are the false analogies with the contemporary world. In the case of the demagogues Michell of course misses the key points. In antiquity their promises were sometimes fulfilled; today never. Secondly, they operated under totally different circumstances and faced totally different problems and forces from their alleged modern counterparts. There is more truth in Sismondi's epigrammatic remark that the ancient proletariat lived at the expense of the state while the modern state lives at the expense of the proletariat, than in all the theories of the apostles of unchanging human nature.

Michell is professor of Political Economy in McMaster University (Hamilton, Ont.). There was a time when economists and sociologists still retained a feeling for historical change even if classical philologists did not. When Eduard Meyer published his fantastic essay on *Die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung des Altertums*, perhaps the first major instance of the collapse of German historical science, Karl Buecher and Max Weber (and others) tore it to shreds. Weber's work in the ancient field had many weaknesses to be sure, yet his *Agrarverhaeltnisse im Altertum* is still far and away the ablest study of the economy of antiquity available to the western world. Significantly enough, Michell makes no mention of it that I could find. Even Buecher and still later Sombart saw that there were fundamental qualitative distinctions between the major historical periods, unable as they were to define them correctly. With Michell, however, we find an economist (like Andreades and others before him) revealing the critical failing charged against the classicists and historians of an earlier era.

F. N. HOWARD (New York).

**Gilson, E.,** *Dante et la philosophie*. Librairie philosophique J. Vrin. Paris 1939. (X, 341 pp.; fr. frs. 50.00)

Gilson's book not only covers the entire problem of the philosophical implications of Dante's work but also examines Dante's relation to the decisive theological and political doctrines of his time. A great part is taken up with a discussion of the supposedly Averroistic traits in Dante's philosophy. Gilson holds that Dante's entire conception is directly opposed to that of Latin Averroism. This is not to deny, however, that some of the Averroistic ideas did jibe with Dante's own, as was the case with the Averroistic separation of philosophy from theology. Although Dante, in contrast to Averroism, did not understand this separation to be a contradiction, he felt the affinity between his own view and the Averroists strongly enough to elevate Siger of Brabant to Paradise in his *Divine Comedy*, where he stands for "pure philosophy" separate from and on the same footing as pure theology.

Gilson shows how the liberation of philosophy from theology governs Dante's whole work and how it culminates in his doctrine of the independent secular Reich, as elaborated in the *De Monarchia*. This conception involves a far-reaching change of the traditional Christian scheme, for it is based



upon the assumption that man has two different ends which cannot be subordinated one to the other: that man's beatitude here on this earth stands, as a genuine Christian goal, side by side with his eternal beatitude in the world hereafter.

HERBERT MARCUSE (Los Angeles).

**Clapham, John H., and Eileen Power, ed.,** *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*. I. The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages. The Macmillan Company. New York 1941. (667 pp.; \$7.50)

"The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages" is the product of a truly international division of labor. From its very beginning the work was beset with severe difficulties. Eileen Power, its learned co-editor, died suddenly. Many of the contributors originally scheduled lived in countries invaded by Hitler and could not finish their assignments. The present fate of many of them remains unknown so that last minute replacements were necessary.

Despite these unusual difficulties, the work as finally published will serve for a long time as a reliable and informative account of agrarian conditions in the middle ages. It may seem astonishing that the labors of fifteen scholars with the most varied outlook and background have produced results that are more often than not in harmony with one another. This becomes understandable, however, when we realize that the majority of the contributions lean toward description of ways of life rather than to interpretation of institutional factors.

One significant point that comes out very clearly in the volume is the almost universal failure of the most varied measures designed to check the squeezing out of the small independent landowning classes. Professor Ostrogorsky's chapter on the Byzantine Empire is especially instructive on this point. Also noteworthy is Marc Bloch's study of the transition from late Roman to medieval society.

Some of the chapters describing the state of affairs in the different countries at the height of medieval society suffer from the rigid separation between agricultural and urban society inherent in the plan of the series. The reader must wait until he reaches Nabholz' final chapter on medieval society in transition to find clues for some of the preceding narrative. But that was perhaps an unavoidable feature of such a carefully planned work. We earnestly hope that the succeeding volumes have been only temporarily deferred, not abandoned.

OTTO KIRCHHEIMER (New York).

**Trinkaus, Charles Edward,** *Adversity's Noblemen*. The Italian Humanists on Happiness. Columbia University Press. New York 1940. (172 pp.; \$2.00)

Trinkaus has hit upon one of the most fundamental problems in the history of the ideological origins of modern society, namely, the part played by the Renaissance in the so-called emancipation of the individual. The humanistic doctrines of happiness are appropriate instruments for under-

standing this process of emancipation, for they reflect the attitude the individual was expected to take towards the new social order.—Moreover, in the tradition of Western philosophy, the quest for happiness has always been a decisive outlet for the protest against the prevailing system of oppression and injustice, constituting a segment of militant, critical materialism.<sup>1</sup> The humanist position on happiness may thus yield a clue as to whether the Renaissance philosophy actually championed the right and freedom of the individual.

Trinkaüs did not have to give an express refutation of the notion that the Renaissance was “the discovery of man and the world,” because that notion has long been obsolete. Insofar as it has implied that there was a release of hitherto suppressed impulses and energies for the exploitation and enjoyment of this world, it may have been partly correct with respect to the exploitation, but it has certainly been misleading as regards the enjoyment. Trinkaüs collects excellent material from the writings of the Humanists, especially from the numerous treatises on Nobility and on the Dignity of Man, all of which demonstrate the predominance of a new form of asceticism and escapism. The period, of course, contained a strong accenting of man’s earthly goods and his right to enjoy them, but this was almost lost amid the general pessimism and other-worldliness. Trinkaüs shows the manifold shadings of the transcendental attitude, the glorification of poverty, and of withdrawal from all every-day activity, the elevation of “knowledge in and for itself” to the rank of the highest virtue, the formation of a snobbish élite of intellectuals who despised the large mass of the “uneducated,” the scorn of reason, and so on, and he summarizes humanistic philosophy in the felicitous phrase: “The new ideal is the medieval ideal of the world-flight made this-worldly.”

The humanist doctrines consequently emerge as the first phase of the lengthy process of “introversion” whereby the rebellious drives and desires of the emancipated individuals were suppressed and diverted into the “inward” realm of Christian virtues. The Humanists thus essentially connect up with the work of the Reformation, as well as with Montaigne’s rather conformist scepticism: they did their part in teaching men to submit to or comply with the forces which governed the rising order of capitalism.

Trinkaüs does not dwell upon the far-reaching social implications of the “introversion.” A shortcoming of his important study, therefore, is that he derives the attitude of the Humanists from the insecurity and competition of their personal existence.

HERBERT MARCUSE (Los Angeles).

**Thorndike, Lynn, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*. Vols. V and VI. The sixteenth Century. Columbia University Press. New York 1941. (695 and 766 pp.: \$10.00)**

With the appearance of these two volumes on the 16th century, a monumental series that began in 1923 comes to a conclusion. To give an idea of the prodigious research involved, the author’s own compilation shows that in these last two volumes more than 3,000 names are cited—writers and men

<sup>1</sup>See *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, ed. by the Institute of Social Research, VII (1938), p. 55.

of learning, printers, princes, prelates and lay figures in the play of ideas. The index includes some seventeen hundred items. Treated or mentioned are Biblical and Jewish writers, church fathers, early medieval Latin writers, and so on through the long list.

The material with which the present two volumes deal is organized in 48 chapters. After an introductory characterization of the century as a whole, the investigation opens with Leonardo da Vinci and proceeds according to individual subjects like Astrology, Anatomy, Alchemy, Medicine, Chiromancy, Natural Philosophy and Natural Magic, so that single chapters often bear in their titles the names of the leading personalities in the field under survey. One must marvel at the author's extensive reading and his knowledge of the vast material; he knows practically everything that was written during and concerning this time: books, manuscripts, pamphlets, and news articles. He lists not only all editions of the works he treats, but the translations and criticisms which they underwent or the discussions which they occasioned, their affinities with similar ideas of earlier writers or their open plagiarisms.

The examination that follows should offer an impression of the rich and interesting material that has gone into his work. We were informed of the extent of astrology, alchemy and occult arts before Thorndike published his work. For this reason it is of especial interest to learn from him what the adversaries of these arts had to say. We know that a papal decree against alchemists existed. But how little material interest the church had in combatting alchemy is disclosed by what Thorndike reports concerning Johannes Pantheus, a Venetian priest. Despite the papal decree Pantheus published in 1518 a work on alchemy, *Art of Metallic Transmutation*, and an edict of Pope Leo X gave him the exclusive right to print the work in the papal states! Subsequently, when someone called the attention of the papal court to the existence of a decree against alchemists, Pantheus quietly wrote another alchemist work (1530), a sort of "cabala of metals," only he was clever enough to say that this was not a work in alchemy but, as the title indicates, *Voarchadumia contra alchimiam: ars distincta ab alchimia et sophia*. Thereupon the apostolic legate again gave him permission to publish (V, p. 539).

Another "adversary" of occult arts, the Frenchman Symphorien Champier, criticizes magic, incantation, images, alchemy, and much of astrology, especially in medicine. His *Dialogue in Destruction of Magic Arts* (1500) enters into the power of demons in magic and shows him to be convinced that men can free themselves of diabolic magic through prayer, confession, and fasting. Good angels can help, as can exorcism, or sorcery which employs demons of a superior order. If a melancholy person speaks languages previously unknown to him, that is a sure sign he is possessed by a demon. Aristotle offers a natural explanation even for this phenomenon, but he may not have encountered people possessed by demons. The Bible and other early Christian works convinced Symphorien that demoniacs exist. He repeats Pico della Mirandola's arguments against astrology in general, but asserts that stars influence the weather, crops, disease, sedition and war, tempering this opinion with the observation that philosophers, farmers, and sailors can foresee these effects as well as astrologers can (V, pp. 111ff).

Despite his rich collection of materials, Thorndike does not offer a definitive picture of the epoch. He excludes from his investigation fields of knowledge that were extremely characteristic of the time with which he is



dealing: mathematics, physics, and especially mechanics, and justifies this procedure on the ground that it would "avoid duplication of what has already been brought out by investigations of others, particularly Pierre Duhem." If Thorndike nevertheless thinks that "sufficient ground has been covered to indicate amply the relations between the magical and the scientific interests and methods in the sixteenth century" (V, p. 12), he is laboring under an illusion. The most precise report out of a criminal court also gives only a picture of a section of life, not of life itself. As on the field of military conquest, so in the field of intellectual activity, not all provinces of knowledge are of equal weight. To hold sway, it is enough to take the key positions and it does not matter much that at many other points the enemy is still able to resist. During the 16th century such key positions were represented by mathematics, physics and above all mechanics. They constituted the basis for shaping the mechanistic conception which slowly emerged from the world of scholastic speculation to dominate the intellectual arena for four centuries. As a result of separating off this element that was so characteristic of the time, what remains—the province of astrology, alchemy, astrological medicine, and such—obtains an undue significance. For this reason, the very opening chapter on Leonardo da Vinci is not an accurate picture of the great scholar. Thorndike has a tendency to lay stress not on what was new in Leonardo but on what was old, what tied him in with the past, for example, "the fact that Leonardo was to a large extent interested in the same topics as his predecessors" (V, p. 23). Thorndike even goes so far as to say that "Leonardo's manuscripts are too disorderly and wanting in method to qualify as classified knowledge or science" (V, p. 18). The revolutionizing of science, however, often comes not from the "classified knowledge" of the university text book but precisely from the "disorderly" and unsystematic outsider. Thorndike does mention, though briefly, the pioneer activities of Leonardo in paleontology and geology, attributing to Leonardo "a determination to face all natural questions on a purely physical basis" (V, p. 36), but he underscores the more strongly that he "harbored many incorrect notions" and wishes to place these "in balance against his instances . . . of argument well sustained upon a strictly natural basis" (V, p. 29). An idle endeavor! We know, for instance, that Newton was largely interested and spent most time not in chemistry in the modern sense but in alchemy, that he was interested in the transmutation of metals, in the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life. And Newton's conception of matter, his atomic theory, made it possible that by rearrangement of these fundamental components one element could be transmuted into another. "The changing of bodies into light," he wrote, "and light into bodies, is very comfortable to the cause of nature which seems delighted with Transmutations."<sup>1</sup>

This was perhaps the reason why Newton's distinguished contemporaries, Huygens and Leibniz, who were aware of his alchemist leanings, suspected that he was seeking to revive occult faculties through his doctrine of attraction at a distance without the intermediary of matter. Huygens called the principle of attraction "absurd" (1690) and Leibniz wrote against Newton his article *Antibarbarus Physicus pro Philosophia reali contra renovationes qualitatum scholasticarum et intelligentiarum chimaricarum*. Newton's alchemy seems to have been connected less with his scientific than with his

<sup>1</sup>J. W. N. Sullivan, *Isaac Newton 1642-1727*, London 1938, p. 52.

mystical meditations. Should we therefore stamp him an avowed representative of the Paracelsian period, or should we rather not maintain that Newton's chemical knowledge was rudimentary and that despite the fact that he was encumbered with obsolete ideas in the field of chemistry, his trail-blazing doctrine of gravitation was to become indisputable master in the intellectual world of the next 200 years?

What applies to Leonardo da Vinci is repeated in many other chapters, for example, in the one on Paracelsus. Thorndike seems to have a predilection for painting the irrational aspects of the human mind while the rational ones interest him little. Thus, he says of Paracelsus that he may be regarded as a specialist in hysteria, mountain diseases and syphilis. On the last he had more medical knowledge than anyone who lived before 1850. It would have been interesting to hear the ideas of the 16th century on hysteria or syphilis, but nothing is said on this subject, while the slogan attributed to Paracelsus, "the sick should be doctors' books," (V, p. 441) receives an entire page of polemical criticism. From the slogan Thorndike deduces that Paracelsus wished to renounce book learning together with profit through the experience of others. Is such an interpretation of the text correct, however? Just at this time, when so many physicians were prone to follow the humanist trend of relying on ancient Greek medical authorities, as Thorndike himself reports (V, p. 435), one must see nothing else in the slogan than the principle, so often extolled elsewhere, that nature should be the ultimate source of our experience. This in no case would involve renouncing the profit to be derived from the experience others have stored in their books.

Thorndike mentions the book *Pirotechnia* (1540) written by Vanuccio Biringuccio, and remarks, "the text deals chiefly with metals and little with fireworks and artillery." One gets the impression that we are dealing here with an alchemist work. Thorndike does say that "the opening chapter is sceptical as to the possibility of transmutation," but he immediately adds, "in general the book impressed me as a sixteenth century version in Italian of what one might find in Latin works of the three previous centuries" (V, p. 544). This would lead to an incorrect impression. Biringuccio is not the belated associate of the middle ages, but on the contrary the representative of modern times, of that new type of man who takes his starting point from practice and enriches his practical experience through theory. He was no alchemist but an engineer, founder of modern metallurgy and practical manager of mines and iron works, as the title of his book, chiefly a treatise on mining and metallurgy, would indicate. "De La Pirotechnia . . . si tratta non solo di ogni sorte & diversita di Miniere ma anchora quanto si ricera intorno a la prattica di quelle cose di quel che si appartienne a l'arte de la fusione ouer gito de metalli . . ." By virtue of his better understanding of frictional laws, Biringuccio introduced into a north Italian iron works a new arrangement of machinery, discovered by him, for the better utilization of water power.

Thorndike sometimes presents facts without giving an explanation of the intellectual currents around them. For instance, he asserts that almost no alchemical treatises had been printed during the period of incunabula and that they appeared slowly in the 16th century, that "for the most part

alchemy remained relatively quiescent in laboratory and manuscripts until the Paracelsan revival of the second half of the century" (V, p. 532). The rise of Paracelsanism went hand in hand with the development of occult philosophy and a benevolent attitude to natural magic. We read that this tendency continued briskly into the 17th century until "by its excesses" it exhausted itself and was replaced by the sceptical rationalism and enlightenment of the 18th century (V, p. 14), though never uniformly in all provinces of knowledge. While Galileo, Descartes and Newton introduced clarity and precision into mathematics, physics and astronomy, the case was different in the fields of biology, chemistry, and medicine. Here, a good deal of the old feeling for occult nature persisted even in the Age of Reason (V, p. 14). Thorndike does not go beyond the assertion. We who are seeking an explanation already know from Duhem that for example as early as the 12th century a wave of rationalism arose and continued into the 13th century, that for example Thierry of the school of Chartre gives, in the 12th century, a rationalistic, purely physical theory of world genesis wherein the six days of the bible are interpreted as six stages of becoming. "L'oeuvre de six jours," Duhem says, "s'est donc déroulée sans aucune intervention direct du Dieu, par le jeu naturel des puissances du feu . . . Dieu créât la matière pour que cette matière, livrée à elle-même, produit le Monde tel qu'il est. Ni Descartes, ni Laplace ne dépasseront l'audacieux rationalisme de Thierry."<sup>1</sup>

Why did this rationalist upsurge of the 12th and 13th centuries give way to anti-rationalist currents, only to reappear, in partial form, in the 16th and, in larger measure, in the 17th century? Why does this age of Reason pursue its triumph only in a few strictly limited fields, in mathematics, physics, mechanics and astronomy, while the old forms of thinking continue to spread within the remaining provinces of knowledge? Thorndike leaves such questions open.

He establishes that about a quarter century after the death of Paracelsus a Paracelsian movement was growing. When Paracelsus' alchemist work, *Archidoxa*, appeared in Cracow in 1569, it was followed in one single year, in 1570, by six other editions, in Basle, Munich, Cologne, and Strassburg. As to how this Paracelsus renaissance is to be explained, Thorndike answers that Paracelsus corresponds to the same spirit which produced Telesio's *Natural Philosophy* in Italy at the same time (1565). This answer shifts the problem: one must inquire why in Italy, Poland and Germany during the second half of the 16th century a demand should arise for books of this kind, and that notwithstanding the most extravagant statements to be found in Paracelsus' *Archidoxa*, for example. Thus, Paracelsus avers that he had seen a man who lived without food for six months, and he adds that a man could live without food provided his feet are planted in the ground. And so on. There is no such thing for Paracelsus as a natural law or natural science. Even the most incurable disease can yield to magic rites. Mystery is everywhere; everywhere there is animism and invisible power, and all this at a time when Copernicus was endeavoring to restore the movements of heavenly bodies to circular regularity and uniformity. Thorndike ends his discussion with the declaration, "Such are the contrasts which are possible in the thought of the same period" (V, p. 629). But

<sup>1</sup>P. Duhem, *Le Système du Monde*, III, Paris 1915, p. 185.



instead of going on to clarify the trend and the contrast for us, he contents himself with the melancholy remark, "It was indeed a discouraging contrast in intellectual history, . . . the same half century which refused to digest and accept the solid demonstrations of *De Revolutionibus* of Copernicus . . . swallowed eagerly the innumerable . . . tomes of Paracelsus and his followers."

Thorndike's magnificent work is nevertheless a mighty contribution to an extension of our knowledge. He has assembled the most wonderful materials for building a cathedral—marble, porphyry, granite. We owe him thanks for this and admiration. But even the most beautiful materials are not yet the cathedral.

These latest two volumes will be indispensable as handbooks for every scholar of the medieval and modern history of science, just as the earlier volumes have been. But are they a history of science and magic in the 16th century?

HENRYK GROSSMAN (New York).

**Ergang, Robert**, *The Potsdam Führer, Frederick William I, Father of Prussian Militarism*. Columbia University Press. New York 1941 (290 pp.; \$3.00)

**Tims, Richard Wonser**, *Germanizing Prussian Poland. The H-K-T Society and the Struggle for the Eastern Marches in the German Empire, 1894-1919*. Columbia University Press. New York 1941. (312 pp.; \$4.25)

**Crothers, George Dunlop**, *The German Elections of 1907*. Columbia University Press. New York 1941. (277 pp.; \$3.00)

Today is a fitting time for the historian to study the origins of Prussian Militarism and of German Imperialism. Ergang has written a good book on Frederick William I, but one with a misleading title, since the term Führer belongs to the modern Nazi movement. It is perfectly true, however, that Frederick William was the father of Prussian militarism and one of the most important men of German history, for the military machine he built survived all the crises and defeats of three centuries. Since Frederick is very little known to the American public, Ergang has done an exceedingly valuable service by bringing together the results of German specialists' studies on the militarist of Potsdam. He very carefully describes the activities of the king himself, but he has studied too little of the general background of Prussian social history. It is highly improbable that Frederick William would have achieved anything if fate had made him, for instance, ruler of Bavaria instead of Prussia. He was able to establish the Prussian body of military officers because in the countries on the Eastern side of the Elbe he found many thousands of poor agrarian noblemen, a type of the Junker which did not exist in Western and Southern Germany.

The development of cities, trade, and industries in Prussia during the 18th century was tremendous. The rise of Berlin from a poor little town to one of the centers of European civilization finds a parallel only in the

development of American cities in the 19th century. The rise of Berlin became possible because Eastern Germany, especially Prussia, was a colonial soil where the mentality of men was different from the old German territories. In spite of all its unpleasant features, Prussia in the 18th century was a country of pioneers.

As a result of the Prussian conquests of the 18th century, millions of Poles had become subjects of the Prussian king. The autocratic rulers of the 18th century were not much interested if their serfs talked a teutonic or a slavic dialect, but in the second half of the 19th century, in the period of rising imperialism, the problem of the national character of German Ostmark became extremely important. Tims has written a very valuable book on the Polish problem in Prussia. He has not only collected the results of local German research, but has added a number of very pertinent critical observations. The surprising thing is not that the Germans persecuted the Poles between 1870 and 1914, but that the enormous German machine achieved so little in fighting them. In 1914, Polish landed ownership, the Polish economic and political organization, was stronger than in 1871.

What was the cause of this surprising failure of German Imperialism? The plan to confiscate Polish landed property, to drive out the Polish population and bring German settlers into Ostmark in their stead was never fulfilled. The conservative attitude of the German landed aristocracy did not allow it. In the face of socialist propaganda, confiscation of the big Polish estates seemed to be a dangerous precedent. If the state can confiscate the property of the Radziwills today why not the property of the Bülowes tomorrow? There was no real hatred between the German and the Polish aristocrats in Prussia. The Polish landlords enjoyed the protection of the high tariffs and sent their sons into the Prussian Army, where they could as easily become officers as the aristocrats of German blood. Prussian agrarian conservatism hindered the fulfillment of the plans of the thorough imperialists. It is interesting to compare the slow and vacillating behaviour of the Prussian government towards the Poles before 1914 with the utmost brutality of the Nazis today. For Nazi Germany has lost the basis of big landed property on which the Empire of the Hohenzollern was built.

German imperialism before 1914 was unable to defeat the property whims of the Junkers, but it was always strong enough to defeat the Social Democratic leadership. That was proved by the famous Reichstag elections of 1907. Crothers has made a careful synthesis of the facts that led to the dissolution of the Reichstag by Bülow, the subsequent electoral campaign, and the tremendous failure of the Social Democratic Party. As soon as the imperial and colonial issue was brought before the electoral body of Germany, the Socialists lost forty of their eighty seats in the Reichstag. It is a pity that Crothers has not made a more detailed study of the statistical details of the election, for these would be a great advantage in knowing in which district German socialism withstood the imperialistic onslaught and in which it did not. It seems that in certain parts of Germany, as for instance in the labor districts of Berlin and Hamburg, practically the whole people had become Socialists up to 1907, not merely the industrial workers, but the white-collar employees, the petty bourgeois, etc. In such districts, the Socialists could win in 1907 as well. But in most of the cities of Germany,

the Socialists had not yet reached such a preponderance among the population. There, a broad middle layer existed between the organized workers on one side and the bourgeoisie on the other. These doubtful elements left the Socialist camp in 1907 and went over to imperialism.

A. ROSENBERG (New York).

**Porché, François**, *Baudelaire et la Présidente*. Editions du Milieu du Monde. Genève 1941. (pp. 250)

**Borel, Pierre**, *Lettres de Guy de Maupassant à Gustave Flaubert*. Edouard Aubanel, ed. Avignon 1940. (pp. 111)

**Carco, Francis**, *Nostalgia de Paris*. Editions du Milieu du Monde. Genève 1941. (pp. 247)

**Lacretelle, Jacques de**, *L'Heure qui change*. Editions du Milieu du Monde. Genève 1941. (pp. 246)

**Ravel, Louis**, *Stendhal curieux homme*. Edouard Aubanel. Avignon 1941. (pp. 109)

**Sainte-Beuve, Cinq Lundis Agenais**. 2 vols. Editions Saint Lanne. Agen 1941. (pp. 165 and 206)

**Hytier, Jean**, *André Gide*. 2nd ed. Editions Edmond Charlot. Alger 1938. (pp. 266)

**Haedens, Kléber**, *Paradoxe sur le Roman*. Editions Sagittaire. Marseille 1941. (pp. 95)

François Porché, who is already to be thanked for his good books on Baudelaire, Verlaine, and Tolstoi, offers us in his new book a biography of Madame Sabatier, the woman whom Théophile Gautier called "La Présidente." She performed at least two significant services for French literature and art: first, for many years, the leading spirits of her time gathered at her table, resulting in intellectual contacts that might otherwise not have been made. Baudelaire, Gautier, Flaubert, the Brothers Goncourt, Ernest Reyer the musician and the best known painter of the epoch, all met at her house. Second, she inspired Baudelaire to a series of his most beautiful poems.

On these two counts "La Présidente" is an interesting figure and on both of them Porché is able to bring together, most cleverly, the known and lesser known facts and in particular to light up the psychological relation of Baudelaire to this woman. His book is a noteworthy contribution to appreciating Baudelaire the poet and the man. Over and above this it interposes a colorful picture of the intellectual social life of a period which was one of the most fascinating in the development of French literature and art.

The small collection of *Maupassant's Letters to Flaubert* is truly characteristic for both writers, for their relation to one another and for their time. The editor's promise to issue more of Maupassant's letters (to his publisher) has unfortunately not been realized up to now.



Carco's "nostalgia" for Paris refers exclusively to the Paris of the poet. To this extent his book can be deemed a contribution, though a more lyric than systematic one, to the history of French literature. It contains an abundance of not uninteresting remarks on Paris and the relation to Paris of Baudelaire, Villon, Paul Fort, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Francois Porché, Victor Hugo, Appolinaire, and many other poets—half a millenium of French poetry is glimpsed from the viewpoint of this unique town.

The book of the Academy member, Jacques de Lacretelle, is a compilation of three dozen short articles on cultural and literary themes. Side by side with extremely shallow remarks on the "art of writing," travel impressions and such, there is a group of well-devised portraits of contemporary French authors: Duhamel, Mauriac, Roger Martin du Gard, Maurois, Claudel, Gide, Cocteau, etc. In its intellectual attitude, the book is full of contradiction: some chapters are outspokenly reactionary and in the crudest sense "anti-bolshevistic"; others evidence a straightforward attitude on the author's part against the mounting attacks, dating from the summer of 1940, on modern French literature. The author speaks for a tolerant understanding of writers who are ideologically quite far from him. Let it be noted that de Lacretelle, in various stout utterances, has for some time courageously defended French literature against reactionary assaults.

The little work on Stendhal is a fore-runner of the literature to be expected in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of his death (March 1942). Full of reverence for Stendhal, the little book brings together all sorts of excerpts from the voluminous Stendhal literature and a string of less characteristic Stendhal anecdotes. It is without a merit of its own.

Of the countless volumes of criticisms and portraits that flowed from the pen of Sainte-Beuve, copious selections have already appeared from the various points of view. The two volumes here bring together articles that Sainte-Beuve wrote about five of the figures who stemmed from the cultural circle of Gascony: Marshal de Monluc, an important writer of the sixteenth century; Marquis de Lassay, whom Sainte-Beuve took as the occasion for writing about the Versailles of Louis the Fourteenth; the two Dukes de Lauzon, one belonging to the 17th, the other to the 18th century; the poet Jasmin. Through solid introductions which take ample account of the results of research carried on during the last ninety years and which provide us with numerous bibliographic data, the works of Sainte-Beuve are most valuably supplemented.

The book by Jean Hytier, instructor at the University of Algiers and author of various studies in aesthetics and literary history, has been characterized by Gide himself as the best that has thus far been written about his work. Hytier prefaces the book with a saying from Gide's diary: "Le point de vue esthétique est le seul où il faille se placer pour parler de mon oeuvre sainement." With this in mind, Hytier, in sovereign mastery of the material, handles the many-sided work of Gide with thoroughness, stimulation, and interest and sets the figure of this writer in the frame of our time.

Kléber Haedens is one of the most vital phenomena among the young generation of writers. Not yet thirty, he can look back on more than that number of novels and essay collections and is at the same time literary critic, film reviewer and sports editor (of *Figaro*). The work before us is an

extraordinarily temperamental disputation with all those who would prescribe definite laws for the French novel. It condemns all authors (Proust for one) who do not guide themselves accordingly. As against these, Haedens defends the rights of creative personality and shows (partly very directly, partly obliquely) the great possibilities of the French novel. In terms of its proper theme, the brochure is an interesting and essentially sympathetic contribution to the actual discussions of the strong and the weak in contemporary French literature.

WILLIAM FINLEY (Chicago, Ill.).

**Newman, Ernest**, *The Life of Richard Wagner, 1859-1866*. Alfred A. Knopf. New York 1941. (xxxvi and 569 pp.; \$5.00)

The third volume of Mr. Newman's extensive biography of Wagner confines itself to the seven years from 1859 to 1866. These, however, are the critical years of Wagner's life, the years of the Tannhäuser scandal in Paris, of Wagner's financial breakdown in the Spring of 1864, his rescue through King Ludwig, the Tristan première, the expulsion from Munich and the union with Cosima. It is the period upon which literature about Wagner has always concentrated its interest. Further light has been thrown on this period today through the publication of Wagner's correspondence with the King of Bavaria. Thus, the problem put to Newman this time was not, as was the case with Wagner's political-revolutionary phase, to work out biographical connections that have been unknown or obscured, but the problem of insight into details often of the most subtle kind. Such details may sometimes assume a quite disproportionate weight in rounding out our knowledge of years whose every event means so eminently much for the development of German music and German ideology.

The musicological contributions Newman has to make, such as the analysis of certain inconsistencies in the second act of the Mastersingers and also of the genesis of the Prize Song, are striking testimonies of both philological acuity and historical instinct. It may not be unfair to summarize the result as follows: Even in the period when Wagner's idea of the *Musikdrama* was fully developed, his music maintains a weight of its own throughout the process of production and this historically justifies its supremacy over the drama which today, since we have gained a greater distance from Wagner, is esthetically manifest anyhow. Newman's inquiries relative to the history of the Siegfried Idyll and its relationship to the third act of the opera move in the same direction. Yet, one must not necessarily endorse Newman's interpretation of the style break in the musical texture of the third act in the passages where the older themes of the idyll are used. At any rate, the reviewer is of the opinion that there were urgent reasons within the composition itself which compelled Wagner, then at the summit of his power, to suspend the *Leitmotiv*-mechanism at decisive spots. Wagner appears to have realized the profound necessity of allowing the musicdrama to "stop," to breathe and to reflect upon itself, as it were. Only in his latest works this has again been more or less forgotten.

Newman's rectifications of detail pertain to strictly biographical facts as well. He destroys with truly epical enjoyment the legend of King Ludwig's

madness. The passages in which he does justice to the eccentricities of the King belong to the most beautiful parts of the book. They fall within a tradition which can call no lesser witnesses than Verlaine and George against the stupidity of common sense. "He had a strong distaste for the pompous ceremonial of Courts, and suffered agonies of boredom at the official dinners and other functions he was sometimes compelled to attend. He preferred the talk of men of culture to the chatter of women, and had no use for the fripperies of the sex-comedy. He had no liking for the conventional royal mountebankery of playing at soldiering. He suffered scheming priests and politicians and other knaves and fools anything but gladly. He had not only the intellectual but the physical *pudeur* of the sensitive solitary, so that he enjoyed the theatre in general, and Wagner's works in particular, most fully when he could listen to the performance either quite alone or in the company merely of a few choice spirits built more or less on his own model, who would not break in upon his dream with the customary gabble of theatre-going humanity. In short, he exhibited so many signs of exceptional sanity that it was a foregone conclusion that the world would some day declare him to be mad; for the majority of men always find it difficult to believe in the sanity of anyone who is not only markedly different from themselves but betrays no great desire for their company, and shows the most uncompromising contempt for their standards of value. His "madness" has accordingly become a legend; yet there is no proof, and there never was any proof, that he was insane in either the strict medical or the strict legal sense of the term." (215) The prudence of Wagner and Cosima contrasts most unfavorably against such reason within the royal madness. They violate the bourgeois moral code while incessantly striving to comply with it. Throughout his work Newman defends Wagner against all kinds of philistine objections. But he takes sides against Wagner with unfailing instinct as soon as the latter deserts to the existing norms and identifies himself with the type of moralism that Nietzsche so thoroughly analyzed.

Another detail of some relevance is the proof that Bülow from the very beginning knew of Wagner's relationship with Cosima and that he aided in keeping it secret. To the same sphere belongs the discovery that Brahms had his hands in the affair of the *Putzmacherin* letters. The realm of purity, chastity and master-like asceticism, which is so significant for the German music of the second part of the 19th century, appears to be inseparably bound up with blackmail, marital scandals and illegitimate birth. The element of plush-culture in Wagner's work, which becomes evident only gradually, is open at hand in the biography. The skeleton in the closet is part of the Wagnerian furniture and Cosima ought to have known very well why she hated Ibsen.

The chapter devoted to her is probably the most outstanding achievement of the whole book. The image of the governess-like Egeria, the power politician of art, would be worthy of a great novel, though it is hardly accidental that such images no longer find their place in novels today, but in works of scientific character. The type of woman to whom life dissolves itself into a sequence of situations which she has to manipulate administratively is of a societal impressiveness which far transcends the psychological case: "The way most likely in the end to achieve her own purposes was to see every difficult situation calmly as a problem that could be 'managed' in terms of an understanding of the personalities involved in it." (282) This analysis is matched



by the description of her intellectual makeup: "In spite of her wide reading and her inexhaustible interest, almost to the end of her long life, in the pageant of the world, hers was a onetrack mind; whatever entered it took on instantaneously the shape and colour of it, and was accepted or rejected according as it squared or failed to square with her own immovably fixed prepossessions and prejudices. She was astonishingly like Wagner in her way of referring everything to the touchstones of a few convenient formulae of her own; she complacently simplified every problem, however complicated, in history, in politics, in literature, in art, in life, by submitting it to the test of conformity or nonconformity with a few principles that were as fixed for her as the constitution of matter or the courses of the stars." (284) In one passage Newman distinguishes Wagner from "the opera composer turning out operas in order to live and competing in the open market with opera composers for the public's money." (233) If Wagner is actually characterized by this aloofness from the market, Cosima has truly developed for him the technique and practice of a monopolist. These as well as the apodictical judgments on matters about which one knows nothing, superseding rational decisions, as it were, by power and authority, have later become fully absorbed into the behavior of National Socialism. Hitler is the heir of Wahnfried not only with regard to racism. The attitude of the sublimely barbarian hangman is already visible throughout the literary judgment of this woman who from her early youth remained faithful to one maxim, to corroborate every existing prejudice through despotism based on success, as if it had been created by herself. Her sentences are both death-sentences and trivialities.

It is she, the daughter of an Hungarian pianist and a French Countess, who has added the mercilessly terroristic touch to the Wagnerian anti-Semitism (Cf. 286f). This fits into Newman's argument which leaves practically no doubt of Geyer's paternity and therewith of Wagner's partially Jewish descent. It rounds out the picture of a revolutionary who after he had become the most intimate friend of the King, refused to intervene for a man condemned to death (324).

T. W. ADORNO (Los Angeles).

### Political and Social Science

**Neumann, Franz, *Behemoth, The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*. Oxford University Press. New York 1942. (xvii and 532 pp.; \$4.00)**

A flood of books on Nazi Germany has been published during the last few years; but only a few of them will survive. Neumann's book belongs to these few; for Neumann has not only a most intimate knowledge of the facts about Germany, but also the theoretical understanding of the new problems that arise together with the coming of Fascism.

There are two usual theories on Nazi Germany: According to one theory, rule by the Nazis means the power of the most energetic representatives of modern monopoly capitalism. The other theory regards Hitler as the builder of a state socialist, or generally socialist, society. Both theories could justify a long and successful existence of Nazi power. For, if capitalism lasted for such a long time, why should not a more energetic and more efficient type of capitalism continue to last? Or, if you regard Hitler's state as socialistic; and if you believe that socialism is the society of the future, you could also give the Nazis a fair chance of long survival.

Neumann disagrees with both interpretations of the Nazi system. He names the state of Hitler "Behemoth," the giant monster of the Jewish prophetic language, that was brought into the modern political terminology by Hobbes. Neumann writes: "Since we believe National Socialism is—or tending to become—a non-state, a chaos, a rule of lawlessness and anarchy, which has 'swallowed' the rights and dignity of man, and is out to transform the world into a chaos by the supremacy of gigantic land masses, we find it apt to call the National Socialist system **THE BEHEMOTH**."

Neumann believes that National Socialism is incompatible with any rational political philosophy, that is, with any doctrine that derives political power from the will or the needs of man. He also doubts that Hitler's Germany is a "state": "But if the National Socialist structure is not a state, what is it? I venture to suggest that we are confronted with a form of society in which the ruling groups control the rest of the population directly, without the mediation of that rational though coercive apparatus hitherto known as the state. This new social form is not yet fully realized, but the trend exists which defines the very essence of the regime."

Neumann makes a very strong case for his new theory and shows, based on an excellent knowledge of all the pertinent facts, the weakness of all the former interpretations of the Nazi system. But there remains one unsolved question: Hitler's organisation has been the strongest power in Europe during the last nine years. That is a fact, and when the usual categories of political science are unable to describe this fact, there is perhaps something wrong with the categories. Learning and science are

always part of an existing society, and the political theory of the last 200 years was an appendix of the "Liberal" society. Also the conservative and the radical or socialist enemies of Liberalism were much more dependent on its theories than they usually confessed or knew. We see, at present, in Europe the total breakdown of the old "Liberal" society. Therefore, also the old science falls. It is a most important part of our fight against Fascism to develop a new theory that fits into the changed world and defeats Fascism on its own field. It is the greatest merit of Neumann's book that it helps to clear the ground for the necessary new political science of our time.

Neumann's book contains, besides its theoretical qualities, many passages of great importance for practical politics, on the contradictions and rifts within the Nazi system, on the best method of a political propaganda war against Hitler, and on the necessary reconstruction of post-war Europe.

ARTHUR ROSENBERG (New York).

**Friedrich, Carl J.,** *Constitutional Government and Democracy*. Little Brown & Company. Boston 1941. (695 pp.; \$4.00)

At a time when constitutional government has disappeared over so large a portion of the globe the publication of this revised edition of Professor Friedrich's earlier work is an event of more than academic importance. For this volume is a profound and extremely comprehensive examination of the fundamental principles of constitutional government.

Constitutionalism, in Professor Friedrich's definition, is essentially the operation of effective restraints on governmental activity. Thus, "the political scientist inquiring into the process of constitutionalizing a government must study the technique of establishing and maintaining effective restraints on political and governmental action." And constitutionalism becomes democratic as the basis of the groups exercising those restraints is broadened.

Professor Friedrich's functional analysis is cast largely in terms of the objectives of government action. The first section of the book is thus concerned with the major functions which governments are created to discharge: administration, the maintenance of economic prosperity and physical security, international affairs, the settlement of disputes, etc. In the second section, Professor Friedrich analyzes the development of constitutionalism as the process by which restraints on governments were established. Here, he examines at length the basic techniques: the enactment of constitutions, the functional and territorial separation of powers, judicial review, the amending process. The actual functioning of modern government is set forth in the third section where Professor Friedrich discusses political parties, representation and electoral systems, cabinet, executive and parliamentary government, administration, interest groups, communications and direct popular action. A chapter on method and very extensive bibliographical notes end the volume.

On all of these problems, the distinguished political scientist writes with vast erudition. His knowledge of the governmental systems of England, America and Continental Europe is extremely extensive and, throughout, the historical background of the various institutions and forms is adequately drawn. With much common sense, Professor Friedrich cuts through a large



number of subjects and concepts which are habitually surrounded with obscure verbiage. At all times, he is concerned with institutions and techniques in terms of their effectiveness as restraints on governmental activity.

In a work projected on so vast a scale it is but natural that anyone who has thought on the problems of political science will find something with which to quarrel. Some may feel, for example, that Professor Friedrich's discussion of responsible government service is not quite his best chapter; that, as Herman Finer has pointed out, he fails to distinguish clearly enough between responsibility as a principle of technical efficiency within the service and responsibility to the public's expressed desires as a fundamental principle of democratic government. Or, that the analysis of interest groups and their relation to constitutional government is not quite as adequate as the excellent chapter on the press and radio which precedes it. One wishes, too, that Professor Friedrich had sketched the development of American political parties against the background of the expanding capitalist economy, which largely explains the minimal nature of their difference, and that he had examined the results for the American system of the absence of any fundamental differences between the major parties. And, if, as some observers have noted, America is beginning to develop a party system rooted in the realities of class division, what will be the impact of that fact on political institutions? But whatever differences one may have with Professor Friedrich, no one will fail to profit immensely from his prodigious scholarship, his shrewd comments and his profound insights.

Professor Friedrich's method "inspects the historical evidence and tries to formulate no more generalizations than the facts will permit." That reluctance to employ any broad analytical apparatus may account for one weakness of this volume. Friedrich knows that institutions are shaped by a multiplicity of factors: technological developments, class antagonism, geographical forces, religious convictions; and in his extensive historical discussions, he gives full recognition to their influence. But he has made no attempt to clarify their interrelationships or to evaluate their respective importance. In a work that so consistently seeks to orientate institutions in their historical setting, the absence of an integrated theory of social change becomes a major defect. A theory of social change would not only have added to the incisiveness of Professor Friedrich's analyses but would have offered us a more adequate basis than he has here given us for projecting the future of constitutional government.

Thus, for example, Professor Friedrich declares that "nowhere has it been found necessary to develop a concept such as the ruling class or the elite. . . . For a constitutional system, and more especially a constitutional democracy, is a system of power in which a group of people called the government administer the collective concerns under a constitution in accordance with the anticipated reactions of the people. Where, then, do the state, the sovereign or the ruling class come in?" But, surely, any realistic examination of history will reveal that the government or the groups who exercise effective restraint have almost invariably been dominated by or limited to particular social classes.

One cannot help but feel, too, that the value of Professor Friedrich's work would have been greatly enhanced had he not set his definition of constitutionalism wholly in terms of institutional restraints. That definition leads

Professor Friedrich to accept, on the whole, present governmental forms and the traditional techniques for restraining power. But constitutionalism may also be defined in terms of the positive functioning of government. Many of the failures of democratic government in recent years have been the result of the inability of antiquated institutional forms to cope with new problems, the hampering influence of traditional constitutional restraints and the ability of powerful economic minorities to prevent governments from giving effect to popular aspirations. The major constitutional problems of our age may therefore well be to discover methods for destroying the restraints minority groups have exercised over governments and of developing new forms of political organization that will conform to new economic realities. And that does not mean, as Professor Friedrich fears, an advocacy of the scrapping of restraints and constitutional government. It means merely that in the place of old forms and old restraints whose combination prevented democracy from functioning effectively in a complex society, we must devise new forms and new restraints that will permit democratic governments to operate efficiently—and constitutionally.

DAVID W. PETEGORSKY (New York).

**Hermens, F. A.,** *Democracy or Anarchy?* A Study of Proportional Representation. University of Notre Dame. Notre Dame, Indiana 1941. (447 pp.; \$4.00)

In this volume, Professor Hermens, who enjoys a well-earned reputation as a thoroughgoing student of electoral systems, presents us with a detailed analysis of the electoral systems of all major countries and most of the smaller ones. To this he has added a special chapter dealing with proportional representation in American local government. Although the author is a convinced anti-proportionalist of long standing, he takes great pains to do justice to the arguments of his adversaries, and the special chapters he devotes to the refutation of all their real and imaginable arguments are among the most original parts of his very informative book. In these chapters he has tried to differentiate between material and formal factors influencing social developments, but unfortunately, he has immediately frustrated the insight he could have derived therefrom by proceeding to elevate the formal factor of the electoral system to a dominant position overshadowing all material elements. Having thus posited the influence of the electoral system as major, he goes on to make proportional representation responsible for specific social developments. His most important argument against it is implicit in the casual connection he draws between the prevalence of proportional representation and the downfall of the parliamentary regime. But the more one follows his learned analysis of every country the more difficult it becomes to share his emphasis on the destructive character of proportional representation. His own argumentation always makes plain that material factors outside the province of the electoral system would have been needed to guarantee the continued existence of a parliamentary regime. Thus, for instance, he feels that one chief requisite for preserving the parliamentary regime consists in the existence of strong right wing social-democratic parties always ready to compromise with the middle-class elements. But it is not evident why such parties should prosper more under a majority than under a proportional system. And the German case where a very strong social-democratic party of the type

cited by Hermens existed under the most stringent system of proportional representation speaks convincingly against the author's thesis. The same apparent lack of relationship between the electoral system and social and political formations is evident in the increase of bureaucratic elements in the labor movement for which Hermens also makes proportional representation partially responsible. But Great Britain and the United States have seen the same process of bureaucratization in the labor movement as Germany, although their electoral system comes so much nearer to Hermens' ideals. Only the author's zeal in his fight against proportional representation makes it understandable that he should speak of the Italian pre-war parliament's "gains in health and life" under the majority system after he has shown in his earlier elaboration that he is fairly conversant with the travesty of parliamentarism in pre-war Italy. At the same time he seems to have had no access to Margot Hentze's scholarly and impartial study on "Pre-Fascist Italy, the Rise and Fall of the Parliamentary Regime."

In sum, the book, at least insofar as it is concerned with Europe, seems, though unwillingly, to testify for the relatively small weight of the individual form of an electoral system (proportional representation, majority system etc.) in a given country. The material presented supports the thesis that the electoral system is more an expression of than a formative force in a given constitutional order, a conclusion to which Professor Friedrich's introduction to the book seems to lend its support. In criticizing the German party system the author quotes with approval Wolfgang Schwarz as "a leading Social-Democratic journalist" (pp. 252/3). In fairness to Schwarz it should have been added that he was one of the very few German Socialists who took to the system of "dual membership," having kept in one pocket his membership card in the Socialist Party and in the other his card in the Nazi Party.

OTTO KIRCHHEIMER (New York).

**Lerner, Max, *Ideas for the Ice Age. Studies in a Revolutionary Era.*** The Viking Press. New York 1941. (432 pp.; \$3.00)

It is almost impossible to review a collection of essays on so many diversified subjects—political theory, literary criticism, current politics, constitutional law. There is, however, a unity of approach underlying these variegated contributions, one that consists in a combination of utopian thinking and machiavellian realism. The real problem is whether the two aspects of Mr. Lerner's philosophy have merged into a unit or whether they still stand unrelatedly side by side.

The volume contains essays of high literary craftsmanship and intrinsic beauty—such as those on Randolph Bourne and Franz Kafka; others (above all those on constitutional law) are masterpieces of analysis, while a remark on propaganda exhibits a shrewd insight into the deficiency of our views on that subject. The kernel of the volume, however, reformulates the problem that Max Lerner first articulated in his "It Is Later Than You Think"—how can a democracy achieve the efficiency of totalitarian systems without abandoning—by even deepening—democracy. In fact, the title of the book could very well have been "Democratic Ends and Totalitarian Means," the title of one of the papers.



If we concentrate our analysis on this kernel of the book, it becomes apparent that Mr. Lerner is primarily a utopian thinker. He understands how to arouse our emotions—but we cannot accept his arguments, or rather he fails to present them. In “Who Owns the Future,” he sets out seven propositions for making a peace which would utilize the resources of the world for the welfare of the masses, that is, a peace that would be neither a veil for American imperialism nor a total state. None of the propositions could have been better formulated, and yet at no place has an attempt been made to show how they can be carried out in practice. All groups in society—industry, labor, congress—are, in his view, dominated by purely selfish interests, all are “prisoners of their habits and thoughts.” If that is so, who is going to make the peace Mr. Lerner rightly wants? If the dominant forces of society are unable (or unwilling) to realize any of the propositions, does Mr. Lerner rely on spontaneous mass movements, fed by chiliastic longings?

The kernel of this book thus reveals a split between utopian thought and realistic analysis which is nowhere overcome, a predominance of utopianism which exemplifies the limping character of progressive thought in America.

Mr. Lerner's thought comes closest to that of Harold Laski in England. And yet there is a fundamental difference between them. In contrast to Max Lerner, Laski writes for and within a powerful English movement, and, however critical one may be towards the Labor Party, it is at least a party, programmatically committed to the very principles which Mr. Lerner elaborates. The vacuum in Mr. Lerner's thought corresponds to the vacuum in American politics. Since the political vacuum cannot apparently be filled, it is time to change the ideology.

FRANZ NEUMANN (New York).

**Perry, Ralph Barton, . . . *Shall not Perish from the Earth*.**  
The Vanguard Press. New York 1941. (159 pp.; \$1.50)

This is another attempt to resolve the “dilemma” of the democratic principle that by virtue of the rights and liberties deriving from that principle it becomes possible for democracy to be abolished by democratic means. Through an analysis of the philosophy underlying modern democracy, Perry shows that the democratic liberties are conditioned upon a definite end, namely, the creation and perpetuation of “a set of social institutions in which liberty is realized.” Democratic tolerance is restricted by this end: it is to be applied to all groups and forces which promote it, and to be denied to all those which are apt to destroy it. The criterion for this is provided by the individualistic principle: only those tendencies and movements are democratic which aim at enhancing the autonomy and reason of the individual, his “power of choice.” Liberty of thought thus emerges as the “essential liberty” of democracy and all other liberties are subordinated to it as requisites and means. The strength of Perry's argument lies in the unerring faith with which he clings to the original critical content of individualism and in his frank admission that “the maxims of democracy do not describe what actually takes place, but define a hope and a goal of effort.”

HERBERT MARCUSE (Los Angeles).

**Stern, Bernhard J.,** *Society and Medical Progress*, Princeton University Press. Princeton 1941. (281 pp.; \$3.00)

The author has devoted this book to the study of the relation between medicine and social progress and their reciprocal influence. Dr. Stern has given a vivid picture of events which at one time or another played an important rôle in medical progress and social relations. His point of view is peculiarly interesting for its originality when he speaks of the development of medical schools and of hospitals in America and of problems which derive from the problems of medical care, the fact that adequate medical care is now beyond the reach of the low income groups. The effects of organization and congested housing on public health and the rôle of economic factors in urban life yield little-known data of paramount importance. Another chapter of the book which condenses in a clear form a series of important facts deals with the consequences of industrial capitalism upon health, and traces in historical outline the relations of health and income as these have been recognized since antiquity and told in a dramatic fashion in an Egyptian papyrus, in a classic work of Hippocrates and in the words of Lucretius not less evidently than in the modern reports of the health offices. The author offers much evidence of the effects of the present economic crisis on the growth of children.

Many other problems are studied in an exact, critical way with the support of documents and statistical data. The history of changing mortality in different countries, the importance of the death rate for judging the health of a community, and above all the problem deriving from the changing age composition of the population are examined from the point of view of the successes obtained by medicine and of the possibility to provide economic security for the aged whose life has been prolonged. The contribution to human welfare inherent in the advances in the field of tropical medicine has opened new areas for agitation and for exploitation. An important political repercussion is demonstrated by the increase in the number of natives contrasting with their decline during earlier periods of the contact with whites. The active effect of medicine on agricultural progress, on stimulating scientific inquiries and far-reaching development in the field of history and in other branches of knowledge is clearly explained. Of special interest, in the judgment of this reviewer, are the pages which deal with the resistances to innovation in medicine, which may be said to be the rule rather than the exception and in which many complex factors are involved. The author examines these factors, beginning with traditional authority and dogmatic oppositions, popular and religious disapproval of dissection, the inertia which met the idea of asepsis and the strenuous difficulties which Lister and Pasteur had to combat before seeing their doctrine accepted.

In the last chapter of his book, Dr. Stern examines especially the situation existing in the United States: the impact of society upon the functioning of the medical profession, and the controversy over the methods of extending adequate medical care to low income groups. We believe that in this book, written with a clear comprehension of the social problems and with a bright vision of the development of medical thought and of medical practice, Dr. Stern has well achieved the objectives of his research and his study, that is, to give an analysis of medicine's changing rôle in society and

of the causes of resistances to medical progress,—in order to gain the right perspectives on contemporary situations.

ARTURO CASTIGLIONI (New Haven, Conn.).

**Page, Charles H.**, *Class and American Sociology*. From Ward to Ross. The Dial Press. New York 1940. (xiv and 319 pp.; \$3.50)

Page's book is concerned with the theories and concepts of the "Sociological Fathers" in America. These fathers for him are Lester F. Ward, William G. Sumner, Albion W. Small, Franklyn H. Giddings, Charles H. Cooley, Edward A. Ross. Thorstein Veblen is wittingly omitted because, technically, he is an economist, and other works have dealt with his class-theories. Page is not an antiquarian in his interest in these thinkers, as his analyses and his conclusion clearly manifest. Therefore, his book is a revealing study, not of concepts of class which can be used in research, but of the relation of a thinker's concept of class to his total speculative system and to his social attitudes. A common element which Page finds in all these thinkers is that "in their general distrust of the 'Lords of Creation' at the one extreme and the class-pointed proletarian leaders at the other, they stand truly in a stream of tradition which remains today a powerful, though somewhat shakier, force in American ideology."

Page is concerned with the fact that the successors of the "Fathers" became involved in research after World War I but they did not make class-analysis part of the research-program until the Great Depression. Today class-analysis is putatively a part of sociological research, although little work has been done on the subject in academic circles except as an aside. Page has only just unearthed the analytic problem which we must face. His own conclusion that class has two meanings, the socio-economic and the socio-psychological, and that "as working concepts in social research both can be effectively employed," seems a confusion of ontology and methodology. That attitudes and consciousness accompany class-position is undoubtedly true, but what attitudes and what consciousness accompany what class-position is a matter of investigation. Such investigation can be made only after, methodologically, an objective set of indices for class-position has been posited and statistical trends in terms of these indices have been plotted. It will be revealing to see whether Page is able to use a double concept of class as a research instrument now that he has analysed the Fathers, and dispatched the "intellectual history" of the subject in America.

GEORGE SIMPSON (New York).

*The Works of Gerrard Winstanley*, with an appendix of documents relating to the Digger Movement, ed. with an introduction by George H. Sabine. Cornell University Press. Ithaca, N. Y. 1941. (686 pp.; \$5.00)

The student of Winstanley is now in an extremely fortunate situation. He possesses an extraordinarily precise analysis of the political and social philosophy, given him by Mr. David Petegorsky,<sup>1</sup> and an excellent edition of the tracts edited with love and care by George H. Sabine to whom he already owes the best modern history of political thought in the English

<sup>1</sup>Reviewed in this periodical Vol. IX, No. 1, pp. 178-179.



language. This beautiful edition merely whets the appetite of the historian of political and social thought; we can only wish that Professor Sabine might give us more such. Since there can be nothing but praise for the edition proper, the review can only be concerned with Professor Sabine's introduction which offers an interpretation in one respect different from that of Mr. Petegorsky. The issue between Professor Sabine and Mr. Petegorsky is, briefly, over whether Winstanley's theory was religious or secular. The problem is not merely academic, but of paramount political significance. Yet before we can indicate our own position, it would be wise to have some clarity as to what we understand by a religious theory of society and politics. We must not deduce from the language employed by a theorist the content and structure of his doctrine. The language might be religious. Arguments might be taken liberally from the Old or the New Testament, the terminology might be completely biblical. The language used would show a great deal of the temper of the period and perhaps of the education of the writer, but little of the structure of his theory. Revolutionary theories especially are often clothed in the garb of antiquity, and the most rationalistic natural lawyers read like commentaries to the Bible and the classics.

Nor is it the religious motive that makes a theory religious. There is no doubt, as Professor Sabine makes abundantly clear, that Winstanley's impetus was religious. Without the liberating force of the Reformation, his political and social theory would not have been possible. Many purely secular writers are animated by noble religious sentiments, and yet religious doctrines do not constitute the kernel of their theories.

What alone can be judged, therefore, is the kernel of the theory. And this kernel is solely the view held as to man's nature. If a theory maintains with the Catholic, and still more, with Protestant theologians, that man is by nature corrupt, that his wickedness is not the product of society but of his inner nature (his original sin), then such theory is purely religious. Applying this standard, we must call Winstanley a secular theorist. "I speak not in relation between the oppressor and the oppressed; the inward bondages I meddle not with in this place, though I am assured that if it be rightly searched into, the inward bondages of the mind, as covetousness, pride, hypocrisy, envy, sorrow, fears, desperation and madness are all occasioned by the outward bondage that one sort of people lay upon another." This remarkable statement from "The Law of Freedom" is quoted in Professor Sabine's introduction—to indicate a "shift of emphasis." I believe it to represent a most complete break with Calvinism and Protestantism in all its forms. Let us add that Winstanley is opposed to the millenarianism of the Fifth Monarchy Men, that he rejects religious teaching in schools, that he identifies the practice of the clergy with witchcraft—and we are forced to the conclusion that the very religious incentive has transcended the confines of a religious theory and turned into a secular revolutionary theory.

This change in a man who had no education, and who was often inconsistent, represents one of the most remarkable moments in the development of political and social thought and makes the endeavours to clarify his position and edit his tracts doubly necessary. There is something of Marsilius of Padua and of modern socialism in Winstanley, a fact which should give him a much better place in the history of political thought than he has held before.

FRANZ NEUMANN (New York).

White, Leslie A. (Editor), *Pioneers in American Anthropology: The Bandelier-Morgan Letters, 1873-1883*. Coronado Cuarto Centennial Publications, 1540-1940. The University of New Mexico Press. Albuquerque 1940. (2 vols., xv and 272 pp.; viii and 257 pp.)

The editor and publishers of these illuminating letters from Adolph E. Bandelier to Lewis H. Morgan have put not only specialists of the history of Spanish-America in their debt, but all students of culture history. For they contain the one way evidence (Morgan's letters have not been discovered) of the decisive influence of Morgan on Bandelier which caused him to reinterpret Mexican history in terms of the democratic pattern which the former had found among the Iroquois. In the 163 letters one can trace the various stages of Bandelier's discipleship, until he became an all out proponent of Morgan's views against his many critics. The letters are rich with ethnological fact and interpretation, not to speak of the very interesting light they throw upon the early history of American anthropology through the personal trials and tribulations of this pioneer anthropologist.

The editor of the letters is known for his defense of value of Morgan's contribution to anthropology. Yet in presenting the letters to the reading public, he takes occasion, in a long introduction, to evaluate the Morgan-Bandelier interpretation of aboriginal Mexican history and finds it wanting. He does so not on the basis of his own field research or by analysis of the original Spanish documentary sources. He rather finds refutation of their position in the evidence presented by Bandelier and Morgan themselves. The controversy is significant for it is relevant to the moot question of the origin of the state, the relationship between what Morgan called *societas*, in which society is based on kinship, and *civitas*, in which other than kinship factors are the primary determinants of human relationships.

It was Morgan's position that all aboriginal American societies were democratic at the time of their discovery, that nowhere had culture developed beyond the stage of *societas*. Bandelier originally held that the Mexicans and Peruvians had developed a social organization which differed in kind from other American tribes, and he gave credence to the accounts of the Spanish writers who were regarded by Morgan as unreliable.

White argues that Bandelier erred in yielding to Morgan. He finds the evidence of the existence of *gentes* (unilateral relationships) obscure; contends that their presence would not in itself have proven that the structure of the society was democratic; presents citations from Bandelier showing that a person's status and role in ancient Mexican society was not determined by kinship but by the possession or lack of property, and to some extent by the territory in which he lived. He thus concludes that public relations among the ancient Mexicans were economic rather than personal in character; that kinship relationships were subordinated in important respects to commodity or property relationships. Since this is the distinguishing feature of the *civitas*, as defined by Morgan, his judgment is that Morgan, and Bandelier following him, were wrong in their characterization of Mexican society at the time of the conquest. What is needed now before final judgment can be given is a further analysis of the Spanish sources themselves, which has not been done since Bandelier, except for a limited though valuable study by Paul Radin.

BERNHARD J. STERN (New York).

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